the ALTERNATIVE:
AN AMERICAN SPECTATOR

Buckley at the Boneyard

Republican Virtue
by Irving Kristol

Wage-Price Controls
by Robert M. Bleiberg

James Dean
by Benjamin Stein

Food and Fustian
by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Solzhenitsyn's Inferno
by Maurice Friedberg

Armies in Politics
by Thomas Molnar

In Memoriam: Ludwig von Mises
by Ralph Raico

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The Continuing Crisis

■ From the bustle of a typical American commercial boulevard one steps briskly into a hushed parlor, wherein well-dressed and bloodless figures drift through a solemn ambience of occasional murmurs and sickeningly sweet fragrances. Some idiot's shoes are squeaking.

■ The pastel walls of this capacious room are dotted with bland pictures of sanitary, idyllic scenes. The frames are fabulously tawdry as are the corpulent pieces of rococo furniture, which slump against the walls and look out on the herd that now mills before a long box with enormous nickel handles. It is raised several feet from the floor and surrounded by a semicircle of unpleasant floral monstrosities. One feels an urgent revulsion in the maw and rushes for an exit. And so we leave the American body politic, circa 1974, to its well-wishers: the liberals, the radicals, the progressives, the journalists—the goody-goodies; and the forces of darkness, the conservatives. We betake ourselves to a local saloon and...*prosit*!

■ As the month began the civilized few were still slapping their knees at the ceremonious withdrawal from the Democratic presidential race by Minnesota's Senator Walter F. Mondale, a man who had for months insisted he was not even in the race. It was supposedly the season to be jolly, but Vancouver's voters were not amused when Mr. Vincent Trasov, artist, campaigned for mayor dressed as a peanut and reiterating the slogan "people are as ready for one nut as for the next." He finished last and snuffled back into Vancouver's wee bohemia. How different his life might have been had he campaigned south of the border, where two more nuts have entered the 1976 presidential marathon. One is Mr. Dale Reusch, an employee of a Lodi, Ohio Ford plant and a patriot. Mr. Reusch will campaign as the official candidate of the Ku Klux Klan. Apparently he intends to be the first presidential candidate ever to campaign in a Halloween costume; possibly he will campaign only at night. The other is Georgia's Governor Jimmy Carter, who feels that his irresistible qualification for the Presidency is that he has no influential political or financial support whatsoever.

■ The ever-changing world of the progressive or the liberal or the sainted or whatever the political goody-goodies now call themselves continues to amuse and to edify, as each new crusade contradicts its predecessor. In years gone by House members waited until the launching of the new Congress to reorganize themselves in their party caucuses, but so exhilirating are the vapors of goody-goodyism now wafting through our famous capital, that as early as December the new Democratic congressional delegation went right to work heaving up prodigious reforms. When they were done they had left the infamous Ways and Means Committee looking like a plucked chicken and they had liberalized and reformed, modernized and revitalized, the power of the Speaker of the House until it looked like nothing so much as...well nothing so much as the fiefdom of Uncle Joe Cannon, the Speaker whom progressives brought low in 1911. Apparently Uncle Joe was sixty-three years ahead of his time.

■ Then too there is the case of Congressman Wilbur D. Mills (D.-Ark.). Not ten years ago the goody-goodies were composing dithyrambs to youth, to their more open life styles, their shedding of inhibitions, and their ardor for creativity. Yet when the hitherto staid chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee began listening to the beat of a different drummer they fell on him in a McCarthyite fury. They denatured his once-powerful committee, hounded him from its chairmanship, and—in an ominous act of police repression that sent a chill through the intellectual community—the forces of know-nothingism arrested his current prodigy, Miss Fanne Fox, for "indecent exposure of the sexual organs by going naked in a public or private place." Philistinism triumphs!

■ Not surprisingly the Democratic Caucus has cashiered the infamous Mr. W.M. (Fishbait) Miller, for twenty-seven years the powerful House doorkeeper and a reminder of the evil past. In recent years Mr. Miller's customs of wearing suspenders to suggest high-waisted striped pants and "kissing women on the cheek" while "whispering a bit of Biblical scripture in their ears" had become intolerable to right-thinking liberals. After the 150-to-77 vote an exultant Representative Phillip Burton (D.-Calif.) allowed as how "The winds of change have reached the House of Representatives," a judgment rendered somewhat dubious when it was divulged that Mr. Miller's conqueror was the disbursing clerk who handles House paychecks and expense accounts.

■ Economic woes notwithstanding there was some reason for cheer at the year's end. The war against crime had some gorgeous moments, as when holdup artiste Mr. Dean Maxwell fired three blasts pointblank into the face of a rich and powerful liquor store proprietor only to discover that his gun was seriously malfunctioning and that one bullet had lodged in his own right foot. So mortified was he that he expired from a heart attack. Mr. Carl Pierce took four hundred dollars from a Columbus, Ohio grocery store and leapt into a waiting getaway car where he discovered that vandals had slashed his tires.

■ The United Nations became a bit of an embarrassment during the month. After thumbing its nose at the U.S. on almost every vote, several of which contradicted the international organization's charter, the distinguished delegates handed the U.S. a higher bill for 1975. The U.S. now pays 25 percent of the annual UN costs and up to 40 percent of the budgets of some of its agencies. During the last weeks of the General Assembly's session, several delegates from emerging nations began turning up in their cups, an excuse that could not be claimed by the abstemious Moslems who nonetheless indulged some bizarre vagaries. In fact so moronic has behavior at the UN become that, by contrast, the public utterances of Uganda's daft President, Idi Amin, appear positively reasonable. The Hon. Mr. Amin has suggested that the United Nations move to Uganda for the compelling reason that then the world body would be "geographically located in the heart of Africa and the world." Where non-Africans would be allowed to reside after such a move the enlightened despot did not reveal.

■ In Rangoon, Burma body snatchers ferreted off the body of Mr. U Thant, a former UN Secretary-General and editor of Norman Cousins' *World* magazine. Mr. Charles G. (Bebe) Rebozo's bank was robbed, and Mr. Tiny Tim's wife, Victoria, and heir, Tulip, are on relief in New Jersey and living in London. The University of Detroit has announced that Father Daniel Berrigan, a folk hero of the late 1960s, will teach something or other during the winter term.

■ Reformers made an auspicious beginning in cleaning up the nefarious regime of Emperor Haile Selassie when they shot the nation's sixty college-educated politicians and administrators. A distraught President Idi Amin of Uganda announced that he would personally take over from his beautiful foreign minister, "the willowy" Princess Elizabeth Bagaaya, a former model and actress whom he deposed after she allegedly "made love to an unknown European" in a restroom at Orly Airport near Paris.

■ It is official. Nelson Rockefeller will be serving his country as Vice President, but there is still considerable uncertainty regarding the future of the thoughtful, profoundly concerned, Mr. Bill Walton The National Basketball Association freshman is, in the words of his financial advisor, "considering a life style that pleases him—participating with nature," a cryptic statement, giving rise to speculation that the boy genius may soon forsake the glories of the hard wood floor for a career in militant nudism. □

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5 **Irving Kristol**.....**Republican Virtue vs. Servile Institutions** 5
10 **Maurice Friedberg**.....**Solzhenitzyn's Inferno** 10
11 **Thomas Molnar**.....**Armies in Politics** 11
14 **Robert M. Bleiberg**.....**Return to Controls?** 14

Departments

2 **The Continuing Crisis**..... 2
4 **Editorial**.....**R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.** 4
13 **The Business of America**.....**Jerome M. Rosow** 13
16 **Letter from a Whig**.....**C. Bascom Slemp** 16
18 **The Public Policy**.....**Peter J. Rusthoven** 18
21 **A Libertarian's Basic Repertoire**.....**Ralph Raico** 21
28 **The Bootblack Stand**.....**George Washington Plunkitt** 28
29 **Brudnoy's Film Index**.....**David Brudnoy** 29
31 **The Talkies**.....**Benjamin Stein** 31
33 **Current Wisdom**.....**Assorted Jackasses** 33
34 **Correspondence**..... 34

Reviews

17 **William Kristol**.....***United Nations Journal*** 17
20 **Benjamin Stein**.....***James Dean*** 20
24 **Charles A. Moser**.....***KGB*** 24
25 **Harry Clor**.....***Fundamental Rights*** 25
26 **Thomas H. Etzold**.....***The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence*** 26
30 **Karlyn Keene**.....***Hope Against Hope*; *Hope Abandoned*** 30

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Published remarkably without regard to race, color, creed, or (most redundantly of all) national origin—and yes, sex, even sex.

Food and Fustian in Rome

Men originally formed governments to protect themselves from low fellows, at least that is how the late political philosopher Mr. Thomas Hobbes of London, England saw it. Otherwise life was "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short"—a concatenation of epithets curiously suggestive of the names of senior partners at an old Wall Street law firm. Of course once governments were established there accumulated reasons beyond the purely defensive for sticking together. There were offensive reasons. Men learned that government not only protected the weak from roving packs of thugs but also allowed the weak to partake of the pleasures and profits of thuggery with comparative impunity: thus, the larval stage of that insidious concept that today's politicoes have powdered and perfumed and christened the welfare state.

I am motivated neither by perversity nor by cynicism in adding these subtle variations to Mr. Hobbes' theory. Rather I am moved by an unstinting realism, informed by the historical record of some four thousand years of "good government," and by a desire to outline history's most thoughtful explanations for government before I uncork my own addendum. The unavoidable fact of political history is that men who originally band together to defend themselves, eventually enrich themselves. Governments, which are originally called into being to protect, soon or late threaten.

There are those who do not see things so darkly; according to them men come together to form governments so that they might build great cities, construct highways, irrigate fields. In short men come together in government so that they might pool their knowledge—so that they might scotch the environment before it scotches them. Admittedly such salutary purposes have occasionally been served, but I am deeply impressed by the fact that it is only a matter of time before every government blooms into an injurious tyranny.

At any rate, surely these are not the only reasons men form governments. If citizens form governments merely to protect themselves from their neighbors how does one explain those governments that have never been able to protect themselves from anyone? How does one explain the perdurable government of Poland or the comical governments of Italy? If governments merely exist to wring taxes from their citizens, how does one explain the existence of the French government, whose tax collectors are met with hot foots and guffaws? And if governments are formed to advance civilization how are we to account for the political contraptions which govern much of Asia, most of Latin America, all of Africa, and Arkansas? Surely there must be another reason for men's time-honored need to come together and to stay together in political organization, and after rigorous cerebrations over the dim past and the lurid present I believe I have excogitated a theory of political organization that supplements the state-of-nature political philosophies of men like Hobbes, Locke, and Nixon.

Where libertarian or statist explanations of government grow dubious my theory saves the day. It is not only a supplementary explanation for the origins of government but an explanation for why men join together in any political or even quasi-political powwow. As I see it men often come together in political groupings because of a primeval and mysterious instinct that raises their fur at the first whiff of gaud and pomp and pretentious purpose. In no time they are milling together and launching sonorities. Just as randy toms instinctively congregate and wail around a lady *Felix domesticus* in heat, a certain kind of human being instinctively congregates with his fellows when the air becomes laced with the scent of political purpose.

I say a certain kind of human being, for from the dawn of civilization many superior individuals have remained blissfully immune to this primitive impulse, and the majority is only mildly susceptible to it. But a certain nuisance minority feels primordial quivers and swarms together when what I choose to call political scent is in the air. It is a scent that wafts from our genes, as primitive and inexplicable as the impulse to procreate but not nearly so fruitful. Oh, occasionally there is a useful purpose served, as Hobbes has argued more or less persuasively, but not often. Take for instance the Holy Roman Empire of yesteryear. What possible purpose did it serve? It was mere grandiosity and gas, a haven for the politically aroused of the time. History is festooned with similar examples, the most recent being the government of Italy which serves no apparent purpose save to allow politicians from the Italian peninsula to gather in a more plush and notable setting.

Still, as I have said, my theory of political organization not only supplements those theories hatched by Hobbes and his colleagues but it probes beyond. It explains the origins not only of political organizations but of quasi-political organizations, hardly any of which ever accomplish anything. What does the American Association of University Professors accomplish? What of the Rotary, the Modern Language Association, or the Chamber of Commerce? And what of the achievements of the Republican Party? Obviously men are not drawn to these organizations to defend themselves from their more savage neighbors or to raise boodle or even—if I may gild the lily—to improve the lot of their fellow man. Men gather in these organizations for the same reason they often gather in governments; they gather, drawn by their collective unconscious to chatter, to strut, and to loll voluptuously in the body heat of like-minded boors.

What other impulse conduced the representatives of one hundred thirty countries to gather recently at the celebrated World Food Conference? According to them, they jetted into Rome's international airport to prevent the imminent starvation of five hundred million people in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and sub-Saharan Africa. According to the press, they quibbled, harangued, and ate. They devoured vast provenders of Scotch smoked salmon, fettuccine with truffles, steak, prosciutto with melon, and Chateaubriand. The menu posted at the conference center offered diners a choice of four kinds of pasta, four kinds of meat, two vegetables, dessert, and wines, beer, mineral water, or cola. Lunches cost 4000 lira, a princely bill by Italian standards. The *New York Post* reported that an international incident ignited when two African delegates, suspecting exploitation at the hands of a conspiracy of Italian waiters, solicited the support of many Third World magnificoes—at issue was the Italian custom of serving only half-filled cups of espresso with the Africans' Danish pastries. During the conference's first press briefing, one of the first questions raised was, "Where do we eat?" And the assembled delegates became so distraught at the dimension of world hunger when it was outlined to them at the first morning sessions, that they completely exhausted the cafeteria's supply of plates and silverware within one hour of adjournment.

Assuredly starvation is one of the cruelest forms of death and, though its frequency might have been exaggerated in recent months, starvation is certainly a calamity deserving organized attention. If the problem can be assuaged by political organization or by quasi-political organization, then no time should be wasted in taking the necessary steps to organize and to act. Alas, time is being wasted and time will be wasted until the emergency passes, for neither Mr. Hobbes' theory applies here nor any other theory save my own. The delegates swarmed to Rome for one and only one elemental purpose: to wit, they swarmed together to loll together. From this Roman holiday only

(continued on page 32)

Irving Kristol

Republican Virtue vs. Servile Institutions

In the end, when all has been said and done, the only authentic criterion for judging any economic or political system, or any set of social institutions, is this: what kind of people emerge from them? In this sense, it is true to say that institutions are made for the people, not vice versa. But today we understand this proposition in a very different way: we worry whether our institutions are sufficiently "responsive" to the people *as they are,* and assume that any discordance between the two constitutes strong evidence that the institution needs to be changed. Behind this assumption there lies a deeper dogma: that the very idea of helping people to shape themselves in a certain way is both presumptuous and superfluous. Presumptuous, because there is no superior knowledge available as to how people should be shaped. Superfluous, because the people will, if left alone, shape themselves better than anyone or anything can shape them. This might be called the democratic dogma, and it is a very different thing from the republican philosophy which animated this nation during its earlier decades but which gradually has become ever more incomprehensible to us. Indeed, it is by now so incomprehensible we find it difficult even to imagine that, as we remake—"restructure," as we say—our traditional institutions to suit us, we may simply be debasing these institutions so that they will more snugly fit our diminished persons.

It will be said that even to suggest such a hypothesis shows a remarkable lack of faith in the American common people. I would half-heartedly deny that accusation. I do indeed have faith in the common people—only I don't have very much faith in them. Nor is there anything snobbish or, as we now say, "elitist" about such a statement. I include myself among those common people and, knowing myself as I do, I would say that anyone who constructed a political system based on unlimited faith in my good character was someone with a fondness for high-risk enterprises.

To put it another way: The common man is not a fool, and the proof that he is not a fool is that he has such modest faith in himself. On the other hand, the common man is human, too, and if politicians go around saying nice things about him, he'll not deny them either. What *will* happen is that the common man will simply become cynical about politicians and politics and public life in general—and this cynicism will, in the long run, have a deleterious effect on his character. For cynicism about others is always accompanied by a proportionate increase in self-centeredness. And as we become self-centered, we become less open to reason, have a weaker sense of obligation to our fellow citizens.

That it is possible to corrupt a citizenry—or for a citizenry to corrupt itself—is something the Founding Fathers understood but which we seem to have forgotten. Today we are sometimes prepared to believe that the people have been deceived into thinking erroneously. But we find it well-nigh impossible to admit that they are corrupt—behaving as if they had a bad character as distinct from a bad opinion or two. This is why we tend to take it for granted that all expressions of *material* grievances by the people must be basically legitimate. After all, people do have intimate as distinct from abstract—knowledge of their material circumstances. To regard this knowledge as less than authoritative is to cast doubt on their *innate* capacity for self-government. The Founding Fathers permitted themselves to have such doubts, which their political theory then encompassed. We give ourselves no such license. Our instinct is always to assume that, once these material grievances are satisfied, the people's natural goodness of character will reassert itself.

Yet the evidence is much to the contrary: satisfying material grievances, these days, does not seem to calm people or make them more reasonable—it often rather encourages them to be even more unreasonable, and even sometimes to invent grievances as an occasion for being more unreasonable. The relation between satisfying men's material wants, or even material needs, and the quality of their moral nature is evidently an ambiguous and equivocal one.

This ambiguity was something the Founding Fathers were much more alert to than we are. They were sufficiently close to their Puritan heritage, and to traditional republican political philosophy, to believe that "luxury," as they called it—by which they meant merely that degree of material well-being which we today call "affluence"—would always represent a grave threat to the spirit of our institutions. None of the Founding Fathers, to my knowledge, ever praised their handiwork by suggesting it would lead to a "society of abundance." We may think that the Sears, Roebuck catalogue is a splendid testimonial to American civilization. Most of the Founding Fathers would have found it a worrisome document. And, had they been informed that people were purchasing this incredible variety of merchandise *by going into debt,* they would have been wildly alarmed.

Perhaps nothing better signifies the difference between the spirit of democratic capitalism in our old Republic and

in our contemporary one than their contrasting attitudes toward debt. To be a debtor, in the older view, was to mortgage your future and to surrender a portion of your independence. They regarded indebtedness as a condition to be avoided, if possible. And they had a low opinion of those who were perpetually in debt, or who seemed uncaring as to whether they were in debt or not—such people were then called "feckless." It isn't that the Founders were simply less sophisticated about economics than we are today. They were very sophisticated, in a different way. They judged an economic system, not merely by whether or not it improved one's standard of living, *but also by what it did to the character of the people who participated in that system.* Our sophistication about economics completely ignores this aspect of the matter—to some degree, one suspects, because we assume that "the character of the people" is inherently unproblematic, but also because we assume that improved material conditions, no matter how achieved, cannot possibly mean an unimproved people.

This last is one expression of that "democratic dogma" which has supplanted the republican philosophy of the early period of this republic. A clear sign of the transformation I am referring to is the way in which the very words "republican" or "republic" have given way before the terms "democratic" or "democracy." This verbal shift mirrors a profound political and psychological change. It is not that the two terms stand for distinctly different conceptions of the proper relations between a citizen and his polity. They need not, and for a long time did not: up until about fifty years ago, they were used without any sense of tension or contrariness existing between them. Indeed, they were frequently and familiarly conjoined together, so that one could speak easily of "our democratic republic" or "our republican democracy" without giving the matter much thought. Yet today the term "republican" has fallen into disfavor, and is rapidly falling into disuse. It is still the title of one of our major parties, but it is not exactly a proud title: Republicans (with a capital "R") do not speak about "republicanism" (with a small "r") but instead, like everyone else, speak about "democracy" and claim to represent the spirit of democracy, properly understood, not the spirit of republicanism, properly understood.

Why does the word "republican" make us so uncomfortable? Why have history textbooks ceased bearing such titles as "The American Republic: from its Founding to the Present Day," in favor of something like "The Democratic Experiment" or "The Democratic Experience"? Why don't we ever talk about "The Republican Experiment" or "The Republican Experience"? I don't think it is merely fashionable linguistic convention which is at work here, but a much deeper and extremely significant habit of mind. The two terms have assumed, over the decades, very different connotations. "Republican" is something we used to be; "democratic" is what we have become. As a matter of fact, one can put it more strongly than that: being "republican" is what we have been *liberated from* so that we could become "democratic."

There is no doubt that the term "republican," today, has about it an aura of confinement, constriction, a limitation of possibilities, whereas "democracy" suggests a genial expansiveness. If I were to say to a group of American educators that the purpose of our public schools is to produce republican citizens, they would either assume that I was being hostile or, more likely, that I had meant to say "democratic" and was merely engaging in a literary fancy. They would certainly sense that a school for republican citizens is something different from the kinds of schools they now administer and teach in.

At the root of that term, "republican," there lies the idea of self-government. Not merely popular government, and not merely individual liberty, but a popular government and an individual liberty that is defined—and is therefore self-limiting—in a certain way. Self-government is self-definition. It is something strenuous, something which involves our making painful demands upon ourselves, something which directs us to a normative conception of the self to which we should properly aspire. You cannot have "self-government" in the individual case unless you have a clear—if general—idea as to the kind of person you ought to be, and you cannot have self-government collectively unless the members of that collectivity have a clear idea as to the kind of people they want to end up being. The idea of self-government is intrinsically normative and stands in opposition to any social and political system which fails to link popular government or individual liberty to a set of accepted values. That is why it is possible to speak of "republican virtue"—we do not in fact speak of it today but we do not find the phrase meaningless, either. On the other hand, one apparently cannot talk about "democratic virtue"—not only do we not use that phrase, but the very phrase itself does not exist: it seems not to be a possible political expression. And the reason why this is so must have something to do with the fact that we conceive of democracy as a way of government and a way of life which has liberated us from the confines of such "virtue." We have separated the democratic idea from the idea of self-government.

> "We cannot imagine how an increase in prosperity could possibly make people worse; rather than better. Neither the Old Testament nor the New had any difficulty in conceiving such a possibility; nor did John Adams or Thomas Jefferson."

Montesquieu, whose political philosophy so powerfully shaped the thinking of the Founding Fathers, understood that in a large, commercial republic, whose stability was based on an equilibrium of economic interests and a balance of political factions, this stability could very easily dissolve into a war of all against all. To prevent this from happening, he said, one could not rely on any set of institutions but on the "spirit" of its citizens. It is this spirit to which the term "republican virtue" refers.

Because the very word "virtue" so frightens us today, suggesting, as it does, fixed ideas of right and wrong which circumscribe our liberty—it is important to emphasize that "republican virtue," in the American meaning of that phrase, is a very different kind of virtue from, say, Christian virtue or classical virtue as the ancient Greeks understood it. It does not signify an excellence of the soul, a perfection of the person. Our idea of "republican virtue" derives from the Romans, and it is a political conception rather than a religious one. Which is to say, "republican virtue" has fairly modest moral implications, rather than high and ambitious ones. Because these moral implications are so modest, "republican virtue" is compatible with a liberal society in which people can have, within limits, different opinions as to ultimate religious truths and different preferences as to their ways of life. What "republican virtue" asks of people is merely that they be public-spirited.

If this doesn't sound like such a formidable demand, it is because we no longer quite understand what it means to be public-spirited. We think it means to have passionate opinions about the public good and to work furiously to translate these opinions into reality. In truth, public-spiritedness, in its original sense, means almost the opposite of that. It means curbing one's passions and moderating one's opinions in order to achieve a large consensus that will ensure domestic tranquility. We think of public-spiritedness as a form of self-expression, an exercise in self-righteousness. The Founding Fathers thought of it as a form of self-control, an exercise in self-government. If we are asked to identify a public-spirited citizen, we are likely to point to someone like Ralph Nader. The Founders pointed to "that noblest Roman of them all," George Washington, as a model for the American citizen. And whatever Ralph Nader's merits may be, they are not George Washington's.

I have said that "republican virtue," in its original American meaning, had only

modest moral implications. But it did (and does) have *some* moral implications, and if we look at George Washington, we see what they are. They include probity, truthfulness, self-reliance, diligence, prudence, and a disinterested concern for the welfare of the republic. In short, they are those virtues which we familiarly associate with "the Protestant ethic" or "the bourgeois ethic"—though, as a Jew, I might point out that they could also be properly associated with "the rabbinical ethic," a fact which the Puritans were certainly very conscious of.

Now, there are two things to be said about such virtues, and about the kind of human character they are supposed to give rise to. First, they are compatible with practically all the religions of Western civilization—including such essentially secular religions as Deism and Stoicism—and are therefore appropriate to a liberal and pluralistic society. And, secondly, they are rather "dull" virtues, precisely because they are so modest in their scope. This "dullness" was always taken to be meritorious, since it meant that you didn't have to be an exceptional person to be a perfectly good citizen. "Republican virtue" is an easy virtue, by the traditional standards of religion and moral philosophy: George Washington is—and was always supposed to be—a model American whom every school boy could assemble from his own parts.

So the question naturally arises: if "republican virtue" is so easy, why do we find the very suggestion of it so irksome? More than that: why do we find the very conception of it so repugnant? For the better part of American history, it was thought proper that every American boy should be encouraged to want to grow up to be like George Washington. Today, that would be regarded as a dismal fate, and we have even taken Washington's birthday away from him for the convenience of a long weekend.

I would say that the basic change in American history took place when it came widely to be believed that it was both natural and right for our republican institutions simply to adapt themselves to the American people, rather than vice versa. It was a gradual change—so gradual that only a few observers took notice of it. For the most part, it was simply accepted as the predestined fulfillment of "the democratic promise" and the full flowering of "the democratic faith"—phrases which are themselves by-products of this transformation. The history of the United States came to be written as the progressive liberation of the American people from all sorts of prior restraints which our rather narrow-minded ancestors insisted on establishing for the people's own good. I think that the history of the United States can indeed be fairly written in these terms. The key question is the degree to which one wishes to regard this history as progressive or otherwise.

We do, of course, regard it as progressive because this history has made the United States into a wealthy and powerful nation. Above all, wealthy: we find sufficient justification in American history by reason of the fact that it has raised our standard of living so spectacularly. But we are not moved to inquire whether this has made us a better people or worse, in terms of the original ideals of this republic. In truth, we cannot imagine how an increase in prosperity could possibly make people worse, rather than better. Neither the Old Testament nor the New had any difficulty in conceiving such a possibility; nor did John Adams or Thomas Jefferson. They believed that people, if they lived carelessly and unreflectively, could corrupt themselves. We think the people are naturally good and that only their institutions can be corrupt.

It is not surprising that the first sphere of human action in which this new spirit manifested itself was the economic. It was the American businessman who first liberated himself from the idea of "republican virtue," in order to create as much wealth, as quickly as possible, for himself as for us. Prior to the Civil War, a businessman was a professional man, in the same sense that doctors and clergymen were professional men. That is to say, it was taken for granted that there was a connection between what he did and what he was—between his vocation and his character—a connection that intimated a code of behavior which defined what was "honorable" and what was not. Thus, it was thought to be dishonorable for a businessman to go bankrupt—not because this was a sign of failure, but because it meant that he was cheating his creditors, who had trusted him. And if a businessman did go bankrupt, it was thought honorable for him to spend the rest of his life paying off his creditors nevertheless—and for his children to assume this burden as well. This may not make any economic sense; our present casual and impersonal attitude toward bankruptcy might be more economically productive. But it did emphatically make *political* sense—if you believe that the effects of economics on our standard of living are less momentous than its effects upon our character.

> "If we are asked to identify a public-spirited citizen, we are likely to point to someone like Ralph Nader. The Founders pointed to 'that noblest Roman of them all'... And whatever Ralph Nader's merits may be, they are not George Washington's."

"Free enterprise," until the Gilded Age, was supposed to be—it wasn't always in fact, but it was supposed to be—a form of moral behavior, and the business life was supposed to be a morally satisfying life. I know it will seem incredible but, up until the advent of the morally neutral entrepreneur who is nothing but an economic instrument—up until the Civil War, that is—most Americans seemed to be of the opinion that to be a businessman was to be an honest and trustworthy man. They were greedy and unscrupulous "speculators," of course. But a sharp distinction was made between such "speculators" and a businessman—not least by the businessmen themselves, who did not permit "speculators," no matter how wealthy, to become members of their clubs. The American businessman had "character," as we now say. And he was in good repute among his fellow citizens. Not in the very best repute, it must be said: prior to the Civil War, it was statesmen and soldiers who were the heroes of popular biographies, since they were thought to have an even greater measure of "republican virtue." But businessmen were much respected, and were thought to be an honorable class of men engaged in an honorable activity—i.e., an activity from which they emerged better men than when they first entered it, as a result of the discipline which this activity exercised upon their characters. The institution of business was thought to make for self-improvement and not simply self-enrichment.

This "bourgeois" businessman—about whose life and work there was absolutely nothing value-free—was succeeded by a more "liberated" type, a more "democratic" type, whose attitude toward economic activity was purely instrumental. The businessman ceased being a kind of man and became a kind of function, devoid of any specifically human qualities. Still, it is astonishing how long the bourgeois ethos lingered on. When I was very young, people who bought things on the installment plan were still regarded as feckless and irresponsible. But people who *sold* things on the installment plan were regarded as engaged in a shady enterprise—because they were, after all, corrupting other people into fecklessness.

All that was in another time, of course, and, I sometimes think, in another country. Today, businessmen assemble in solemn meetings in order to figure out what they should do to achieve public respect and favor. Their concern is both serious and sincere, and one almost does not have the heart to tell them that their problem is not in the area of *doing* but in the area of *being*. They, like the rest of us, were born into a world they never made, and—again like the rest of us—find it close to impossible to imagine that the trouble they are in is organically related to their having become the kind of successful people our society said they should become. →

Another illustration of what I have in mind is the extraordinary increase, in recent years, of strikes which, for quite trivial reasons, inflict enormous damage on the community. I am thinking especially of strikes by policemen, firemen, garbage collectors, and transport workers. These are quite common today, though they were yesterday very rare, and the day before yesterday were close to unthinkable. American trade unions used to be essentially defensive institutions—protecting the human rights and economic position of their members—and their ethos was one of fraternity. They have become purely acquisitive combinations, exercising monopoly power in a spirit of the-public-be-damned.

Now, I am not saying that, in some instances, these Americans who go on strike do not have legitimate grievances. On the contrary: I assume they do. But a legitimate grievance can become illegitimate—just as a just war can become unjust—if the means employed are incommensurate with the ends sought. And I must say that I am appalled that a group of American workers should cease performing essential services to their fellow Americans because they seek a 5 percent or 8 percent increase in pay over what they receive or over what was offered them. Something is definitely wrong when that can happen, as it now does with increasing frequency. How can that rather trivial goal possibly justify such aggressive and costly action?

I have used the phrase, "that rather trivial goal," in order to put the matter as provocatively as possible. (Sometimes we do have to be provoked to think clearly.) I know I will be told that these workers have a difficult time making ends meet and that a 5 percent or an 8 percent increase is not to be sneered at. That is true enough—but I would also insist it is really beside the point. Very few of our workers live on the margin of subsistence; they are not in the kind of extreme and desperate condition which might justify such extreme and desperate action. The extra money, after taxes have been deducted, will make their situation slightly more comfortable that it was. And for *this* they are prepared to convulse the community and threaten the livelihood of their fellow-citizens—many of whom are surely less well off than they are. This can only be described as selfishness. And that description applies whether one regards their grievances as legitimate or not.

Nevertheless, very few of us seem to be able to say this bluntly, without embarrassment. We are more likely to point out that these ordinary people are behaving no differently from many greedy and unscrupulous businessmen. This argument has some truth in it—but what a strange truth it is! It implies, in effect, that the legitimate criteria of behavior in a democracy are to be found somewhere in the vicinity of the lowest common denominator. And, of course, under the pressure of this perverse moral egalitarianism, the lowest common denominator sinks ever lower.

After business and organized labor, just about every other area of American life followed a similar path. Religion may have followed more reluctantly, but follow it did. The sermon which denounced the failings of the congregation slowly gave way to the sermon which denounced the inadequacy of our social, economic, and political institutions. Making demands upon oneself became unpopular; making demands upon others became habitual. It is interesting to recall that, up until about a hundred years ago, it was common for Congress or state legislatures to call, by resolution, for a day of fasting, to take note of some particularly solemn occasion. Moreover, such calls were directed toward all citizens, rich and poor, indiscriminately. It is quite impossible for Congress even to contemplate such a resolution today. And should some brave Congressman introduce such a resolution, it would quickly be studded by amendments exempting all those below a certain level of income or who were engaged in various essential services. We find the very idea of a fast-day barbarous—it violates the nutritional rules established by HEW. And the idea that poor people should fast, just like everyone else, would strike us as utterly preposterous. We *know* that only people with full stomachs and on a well-balanced diet can be expected to meet such a harsh moral obligation. The fact that our ancestors, who were much poorer than we, thought otherwise is attributed to their lack of enlightenment—as is the fact that, even today, observant Jews and Catholics and Moslems think and act otherwise. Dostoievsky predicted, in *The Brothers Karamazov,* that when the anti-Christ came, he would have inscribed on his banner: "First feed people, and then ask them to be virtuous." We have improved on that slogan to the extent of adding decent housing, good schools, free medical care, and adequate public transportation as necessary preconditions of virtue. And then we wonder why such benevolence seems not to encourage people to have a good opinion of their political order. It does not occur to us that, in a democracy, if the citizenry lack self-respect they will be incapable of any kind of respect—that to the degree we officially propound a mean and squalid view of humanity, there will emerge mean and squalid human beings. All of us normally become what we are expected to become, and if our society thinks it is normal for us to be enslaved to our appetites and our desires rather than to govern them, then we shall come to regard such enslavement as true liberty—and shall simultaneously regard any suggestion of self-government as an infraction of this liberty.

Our politicians have, over these past decades, learned this lesson well, in the sense that they have successfully debased themselves to what they take to be the appropriate common level. The average politician of today sees it as his role to gratify the appetites of the people—to liberate them from deprivation, as we say. The truly creative politician of today is more "far-sighted" in that he discovers new and original deprivations, popularizes them, makes them keenly felt. "What have you done for us lately?" is now assumed to be the absolutely proper question for the citizen to address to his representative, who, in turn, frantically speculates as to what he can do for them tomorrow. What this means, quite simply, is that by our traditional standards of republican political philosophy, American politics today is the politics of demagogy, the politics of bribery. We obscurely recognize this fact by reserving the term "statesman" for those exceptional politicians who hold themselves somewhat aloof from this process of soliciting and pandering—though we are also so suspicious of our own sentiments, which smell ever so slightly of indecent elevation, that we will quickly and cynically wonder whether the "statesman" is merely a politician who is not running for re-election.

If anyone were to suggest that, in a self-governing republic, it should be normal for the people's representatives to wish to be as statesmanlike as possible, continually engaged in a reasonable conversation with their constituents, he would be informed that he is not living in the real world. But this real world is something which we have ourselves constructed. American politics wasn't always like this, and wasn't ever supposed to be like this. Unbelievable though it may seem, there was a time—in living memory—when those who campaigned too energetically for public office were, for that reason alone, viewed with more suspicion. Public office was thought to be a burdensome obligation to which only the more public-spirited would aspire. I don't want to idealize the past or exaggerate its merits—what we are talking about is a matter of degree. The "democratic politician" has always coexisted, in this country, with the "republican statesman." But he certainly never predominated so absolutely as he does today.

The one group which seems to understand this situation best of all is the

> "Self-government is self-definition. It is something strenuous, something which involves our making painful demands upon ourselves, something which directs us to a normative concept of the self to which we should properly aspire."

politicians themselves. Most of them will admit, in private conversation, that they would much prefer to be statesmanlike, only they don't see how that is possible. They must, they say, be "responsive" to the people if they are to be able to function at all. The irony is that, as they become ever more "responsive," the people put less and less faith in them and in our political institutions generally.

Very much the same thing has happened in the field of education. When our schools were "republican" institutions, instructing young citizens in the three R's, in elementary civics, and in the rudiments of good manners, they had both self-confidence and universal respect. Today, when they are "democratic" institutions, when they are making few demands on their students but feverishly trying to satisfy all the demands which students make on them, they are in a condition of perpetual crisis. Most of the "progressive" and "liberating" reforms in education, over these past decades, have resulted in most of us being more dissatisfied with American education than was previously the case. You would think that this might give us food for thought—but, no, it only incites us to invent new and better reforms, all in the direction of encouraging students to express more freely their appetites, to more freely indulge their desires. And, inevitably, students end up lacking confidence in these institutions which, lacking all self-confidence, seem to have no other purpose than to pander to them.

And this, I think, is the main point which emerges from the American democratic experience of recent years. People do not have confidence in institutions which do not have confidence in themselves. People do not have respect for institutions which, instead of making demands upon them, are completely subservient to their whims. In short, a people will not respect a polity that has so low an opinion of them that it thinks it absurd to insist that people become better than they are. Not simply more democratic; not simply more free; not simply more affluent; but, in some clear sense, better.

The original republican idea of self-government was what we would today call high-minded. The self which is supposed to govern is necessarily conceived of as being a better self than the self which naturally exists, and the purpose of the republic, in all its aspects, is inherently a self-improving one. The later democratic idea of self-government is based on the premise that one's natural self is the best of all possible selves, and that it is the institutions of society which are inevitably corrupting of natural goodness. These are two very different readings of human nature, and they lead to different kinds of politics. The first results in people making moral demands upon themselves; the second results in people making moral demands upon social reality.

I know of no way in which this philosophical argument about human nature can be settled in the abstract. But our own political experience does, I think, give us some empirical clues as to which reading of human nature is more humanly satisfying. And the evidence seems overwhelmingly favorable to the republican reading. After all, it is a fact that Americans today "have never had it so good," as one says, in the sense that they are wealthier and healthier and enjoy greater personal freedom than did their fathers or grandfathers. But it is also a fact that they don't feel at all good about themselves and their condition, and a great many of our young people seem to feel positively miserable about their human condition. It can hardly be without significance that, among the young especially, the idea of "liberation" from a "repressive" actuality should now be so popular. There are some of us who will delude ourselves into believing that these young people are fretful at the remnants of republican restrictiveness, and they will assert—in the words of Al Smith—that the only and sure cure for the ills of democracy is more democracy. If you are committed to the democratic dogma, that is the only possible remark you can make. You are not likely to contemplate the possibility that it is the very society based on this dogma which comes to be felt as "repressive" and from which "liberation" is sought.

> "Scarsdale is obviously an experiment that has failed. And the reason—equally obvious, I should think—is that the life it proposes to its citizens is so devoid of personal moral substance, and is therefore so meaningless."

Some ten years ago, in the midst of the rebellion on our campuses, an article appeared in the *New York Times Magazine*. It was written by a Yale psychologist, and its title was a quotation from one of the student leaders. That title was "You Don't Know What Hell Is Like Unless You Were Raised in Scarsdale." Now, Scarsdale is one of our most affluent and sophisticated suburbs. It is also, so far as young people are concerned, one of the most tolerant and "permissive" places in America. Nothing is too good or too expensive for the children of Scarsdale. And yet, the children for the most part despise it and leave it as soon as they can.

This is a serious matter. For the American democracy today seems really to have no other purpose than to create more and more Scarsdales—to convert the entire nation into a larger Scarsdale. That is what our political leaders promise us; that is what our economic leaders promise us; and even our religious leaders will issue indictments against the nation because there are still so many people who are "underprivileged" by the Scarsdale standard. But Scarsdale is obviously an experiment that has failed. And the reason—equally obvious, I should think—is that the life it proposes to its citizens is so devoid of personal moral substance, and is therefore so meaningless.

We are troubled by this phenomenon, and we wonder why it is that Americans, even as they improve their material conditions, are losing faith in their institutions. We also begin to wonder how these institutions can be made more "responsive" to the people, so as to soothe their discontent. What we do not wish to see is that our institutions are being made ever more "responsive" to the wrong people—to the people as they are, not as they might be. People do not respect institutions which are servile; people only respect a society which makes demands on them, which insists that they become better than they are. Without such a moral conception of the self, without a vivid idea as to the kind of person a citizen is supposed to become, there can be no self-government. And without self-government, the people perish—from boredom, from a lack of self-respect, and from a loss of confidence in their institutions which, they realize, only mirror their alienation from the better selves that lie dormant within their actual selves. □

The above essay was delivered as a Poynter Lecture at Indiana University. Reprints are available at $.50 each from The Poynter Project, Sycamore 217, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana 47401.

Maurice Friedberg

Solzhenitsyn's Inferno

In Chekhov's *Seagull* a character announces that in a well-made play a gun hanging on a wall must discharge before the performance is over. So it was with the overall work of Alexander Solzhenitsyn. His first published work, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich,* though set in a Soviet prison camp, ends on an ironically soothing note. The grim day in question, readers are told, was not a bad day at all; there were no unusual horrors, no illness, in fact Ivan Denisovich succeeded in obtaining an extra ration of bread. Similarly, in the partly autobiographical novel *Cancer Ward* (which Solzhenitsyn had hoped, as it turned out in vain, to have published in the USSR) the ending is relatively happy: the central character escapes for a time the clutches of death and is on his way to the relative luxury of exile in a distant village in Central Asia. It was in *The First Circle* that the premonition of more dreadful accounts grew stronger. A novel describing a research institute manned by convict scientists and technicians was named after the outermost, relatively humane and benign circle in Dante's Inferno. Clearly, readers were to expect more.

Now it is all here. *The Gulag Archipelago* is a mammoth of a book, over twelve hundred pages in all, only half of that available in English so far. It does, as expected, take us into the center of the hell of the vast empire of Soviet concentration camps, and since its reality is more frightening than anything artistic imagination could contrive, Solzhenitsyn wisely eschews all temptation to broadly display his skills as a novelist. Even though both Russian volumes are subtitled "an experiment in literary investigation," Solzhenitsyn the artist remains very much in the background, and his presence is only unobtrusively felt in the quasi-literary manner of presentation of the material. Most of the time, the author's function is that of a historian, of an eyewitness and a collector of other prisoners' testimonies. Only occasionally does the writer's ordinarily controlled outrage spill over into a heavily sarcastic aside.

Much of what is found in the two large volumes has long been known to specialists and to others in the West who wanted to know. There have been, over the years, survivors' accounts and several scholarly studies of the Soviet system of periodic purges and the network of concentration camps, most recently Robert Conquest's magisterial *The Great Terror.* Solzhenitsyn's unique contribution is merging, as it were, the two types of accounts, grounding the individual eyewitness stories in a context of historical perspective and injecting dramatic immediacy and human concreteness into the understandably somewhat abstract treatises of scholars.

Perhaps the most important feature of *The Gulag Archipelago* may be discerned from the dates that appear below the two words of the title page: 1918-1956. The dates reveal that the vast territory of prisons, camps, and ostensibly "free" settlements that are all part of a land ruled over by the secret police was not, as Soviet authorities would have us believe, a temporary aberration of the system that came into existence under Stalin and promptly disappeared after the dictator's death. The dates "1918-1956" emphasize that the jails and camps are an integral part of the Soviet State, that they came into existence immediately after its establishment in November 1917, and survived even after Stalin's death in March 1953. And although the account breaks off in 1956, the year of Khrushchev's famous attack on Stalin, Solzhenitsyn makes no suggestion that the archipelago of prisons has receded into the past. He need not have. Ample evidence is available of its continued existence, and new accounts continue to reach the West with depressing frequency, including much documentation on that newly fashionable institution, the psychiatric prison for inmates whose "illness" is their disagreement with government policies.

The Gulag Archipelago is, in essence, an account of a war that the Soviet regime has been waging on its people for well over half a century. One need only open the book at random to discover the bewildering variety of categories of citizens who were at any one time judged sufficiently dangerous to warrant their incarceration in camps. To pick a random page, 59 of volume one, we learn that among those imprisoned in the mid-1930s were: 1) Schutzbündlers, "who lost the class battles in Vienna and had come to the Fatherland of the world proletariat for refuge"; 2) Esperantists, "a harmful group which Stalin undertook to smoke out during the years when Hitler was doing the same thing"; 3) "Illegal philosophical circles"; 4)"Teachers who disagreed with the advanced laboratory-team system of instruction"; 5)"Employees of the Political Red Cross"; 6) "Mountain tribes of the North Caucasus who were arrested for their 1935 revolt"; 7)"Believers, who this time were unwilling to work on Sundays.... And there were collective farmers sent up for sabotage because they refused to work on religious feast days...."; 8) "And, always, there were those who refused to become NKVD informers. (Among them were priests who refused to violate the secrecy of the confessional, for the *Organs* had very quickly discovered how useful it was to learn the content of confessions—the only use they found for religion.)"

A similar effect may be achieved by glancing through any one of the pages in the glossary that appears at the end of the English translation of the first volume. Thus, on page 638, we find among others the following: "Crimean Tatars—Exiled by Stalin to Central Asia in 1944 on charges of collaborating with the Germans. Dashnak—Anti-Bolshevik group in Armenia after 1917 Revolution. Doctor's Case—The arrest of leading Kremlin physicians, most of them Jews, in 1952 on trumped-up charges of plotting against the lives of Soviet leaders.... Hehalutz—Zionist movement that prepared young Jews for settling in the Holy Land; it founded most of the kibbutzim. Hiwi—German designation for Russian volunteers in German armed forces during World War II; acronym for Hilfswillige. Industrial Academy—A Moscow school that served as a training ground of industrial managers in late 1920s and early 1930s. Ingush—Ethnic group of Northern Caucasus; exiled by Stalin in 1944 on charges of collaboration with Germans. Kalmyks—Ethnic group of Northern Caucasus; exiled by Stalin in 1943 on charges of collaboration with German forces."

The monstrosities of concentration camp existence are all here: the starving prisoners, the dying, the dead. There are a few hair-raising incidents (e.g., in 1929, about a hundred prisoners were burned alive for nonfulfillment of production quotas) but not very many; one suspects that Solzhenitsyn chose not to cite a large number of them for aesthetic reasons. There are the children condemned to hell for the alleged sins of their fathers, already killed or still languishing in other camps; in camp conditions, these children were soon transformed into vicious animals, ready and eager to kill for a piece of bread. Prisoners—women and men alike—were beaten and starved and tortured with labor beyond their strength and the women were also systematically raped. Political doctrine resulted in preferential treatment for common criminals who were encouraged to assert their rule over class enemies, the "politicals." Some consideration was also shown former Soviet policemen now themselves in jail. There is grim irony in pages describing occasional evenings of "entertainment" for the inmates: camp administrators had become convinced that songs and music are conducive to increased labor productivity.

Convict labor, Solzhenitsyn points out,

has over the years become an important factor in the running of the Soviet economy. True, the labor is not very productive, but it does offer some advantages: it is cheap and mobile, and does not require even such simple amenities as half-decent housing or acceptable food. No provisions at all were required for the laborers' families; there was no need for schools, services, and so forth. And yet, as Solzhenitsyn demonstrates in a few poignant pages, the sweat of millions and the lives of thousands of prisoners were often simply wasted. The White Sea-Baltic canal that was built by Soviet convicts in the early 1930s was the only project of the kind to receive wide publicity. It was hailed as a noble experiment in the rehabilitation of criminals by means of useful labor. In 1934, thirty-six Soviet writers, including such celebrities as Maxim Gorky and Alexei Tolstoy, jointly wrote a book glorifying the "enthusiastic" work of the builders of the canal. Unfortunately, the book was equally generous in heaping praise on the jailers, who were soon to be arrested themselves as enemies of the Party during the mass purges of 1937-38. Consequently, the Gorky-Tolstoy volume was itself destroyed; Solzhenitsyn miraculously obtained a surviving copy. There is, however, another Soviet literary work that extols the "joys" of convict labor building the White Sea-Baltic canal. Nikolai Pogodin's play *The Aristocrats*, a *gay comedy* filled with *happy laughter*, is to this day reprinted in the USSR and performed on the Soviet stage.

In 1956, after his own release from prison, Solzhenitsyn visited the White Sea-Baltic canal. The waterway, it turned out, was much too shallow for modern ships and was hardly being used at all.

Reading the two heavy volumes of *The Gulag Archipelago* is a painful and dizzying experience. Thousands of names of victims and henchmen overload one's memory, hundreds of outrages stagger the imagination, scores of ironic twists of fate (jailer turns inmate; slave is miraculously raised to glory; a Stalinist ends up in a Soviet camp on the same bunk with a Nazi) ultimately deaden the senses. Gradually, however, the avalanche of facts begins to settle in one's mind and even to assume some shape. And then comes the first reasoned sensation. The evil of Soviet camps was essentially futile. It did not "remake" men. It merely destroyed them. Not only the inmates, either: frequently their jailers as well, for the system devoured its most faithful servants. Millions were destroyed physically, millions more were maimed morally for life by being forced to become accomplices in the crime—as active informers or just passive bystanders. Still, for all that, the camps left no mighty pyramids testifying to the Pharaoh's grandeur. In fact, the Pharaoh's embalmed corpse was thrown out of the Moscow mausoleum where Lenin alone now reposes. All that is left is a canal that is too shallow for navigation and a railroad rusting somewhere in the sub-Arctic which (as another Russian writer recently reported) was also built on Stalin's orders at enormous human cost and expense and which leads, quite literally, from nowhere to nowhere. □

Thomas Molnar

Armies In Politics

Among the taboo topics in intellectual circles the emergence of the military as a political force East, West, and in the Third World is high on the list. One of the principal doctrinal points of liberal democracy is that the military must at all times be subordinated to the civilian authority of the government; wars, it is said, are too serious a business to be left to the generals. In spite of this theoretical abhorrence, mankind seems to have entered a new military era: armies took over in Ankara (1920), in Cairo (1952), in Athens (1967), in Lima (1968), in Montevideo (1972), in Santiago (1973), and in Addis Ababa and Lisbon (1974)—to mention only a few examples. A wide belt of military regimes now stretches around the globe from Brazil to Indochina and covering almost all of Africa. And military coups d'etat, whether successful or not, cannot be counted any more.

The repugnance intellectuals feel toward military regimes can be attributed to a number of causes, chief among them being that armies are reputedly "right-wing" with authoritarian, eventually even with fascist leanings. In the lingo of the intelligentsia, these epithets denote an absence of any convictions or ideological choice, and an adherence to self-interest and brute force. Thus even today military regimes are referred to in the liberal-Left media as "juntas," the rule by generals who overthrow the oligarchy and claim to govern in the people's interest, but who in reality are themselves the representatives of the oligarchy and as such continue to oppress the people. Recently in *Le Monde* the French commentator Maurice Duverger balanced his approval of a strong Communist Party in Portugal with his worry that the Portuguese military may still turn out to be right-wingers. But is the world's military really so right-wing?

It is rather obvious that even in undemocratic regimes the military do not assume a political position unless there is a vacuum of power and authority. For more than two centuries after Caesar, although emperors were *imperators* (military commanders), the Roman army was subservient to the State; not before chaos had set in, in the third century, did the army take over and become hopelessly politicized, and it yielded first place again to civilians as soon as Christianity endowed the State with a new authority (in Constantinople).

Moreover, in the underdeveloped countries we find that the army fulfills a number of essential functions. It has an *esprit de corps* where national consciousness is hardly articulated and where centrifugal (for example, tribal) forces threaten unity. In serving as a melting pot for all classes in stratified populations, it offers opportunities for members of an inferior class to climb to the highest positions, the kind of opportunities offered by the Catholic Church in medieval Europe. It is aware of the country's economic and social problems because it draws thus from all strata of society. Finally, the army has both the education (often from foreign military schools) and the equipment to spur economic and technical development.

Military men in the Third World are relatively new to the ideological game and they generally mistrust both dominant ideologies, Marxism and capitalism. The first appeals to them because it proposes collective effort, rapid development (at least on paper), and national discipline, attractive goals for the soldiers' own mentality and training. On the other hand, Marxism brings the Moscow connection, the insidiously pursued aim of setting up a state within the State, and a threat to independence. The military regard the Marxists as rivals in the sense also that the latter arrive with a ready-made and prestigious faith under whose pounding the fragile cohesion of the host country might dangerously totter. But the military equally fear a capitalist penetration; not only because the white man (or the Japanese businessman) evokes bad memories and a present political pressure, but also because he brings with him the rich man's comfortably liberal mentality. The rational economic system of capitalism—maximization of happiness at least cost in terms of sacrifice—is

acceptable to Western society because the sacrifice was made long ago, by previous generations, and the maximum happiness is visible on the horizon. But in amorphous societies, as in much of the Third World, the individualistic spirit of enterprise is not found attractive and its benefits are not seen as spreading to large numbers.

Many army officers in such countries do not necessarily want to rule, but they see no other alternative as they look at their civilian superiors and equals. The civilians are either corrupt or are partisans of alien systems whose implantation would bring not only foreign investment but, inevitably, foreign influence too. The Greek generals in 1967 did, *mutatis mutandis*, what Peron in 1943 and the Rumanian generals in the late thirties had done: remove from power the bourgeois-business circles who, through the ideal of liberalism, were also wedded to parliamentary democracy and to Western political influence. (In prewar Rumania oil, banking, metallurgy, and insurance were in British, French, and Belgian hands; parliament and a large part of the press were also said to be manipulated by them.) The problem is not that foreign influences are evil things, rather that they allow a weak country no room for maneuver, no option, no opportunity to become an object of bidding by foreign powers. Before Peron, Argentina was, for better or for worse, a *chasse-gardée* of Great Britain; a similar status was the lot of all other semi-colonized countries and, naturally, of all colonies.

Military Populism

It is in the nature of things that the military suspect the civilians in these countries of "neocolonialist leanings." In Argentina, the present internal chaos—which, rightly or wrongly, is regarded as a foreign threat too—has engendered three army sections, each confident that it will soon take power: the *peronistas* who remain national-syndicalists; the *pinochetistas* who would like to see a controlled return of foreign investment; and the *peruvianos* who are non-Marxist yet radical socialists, nationalizers of land and industry, and partisans of cooperatives. None of these factions, if in power, would return the bulk of national wealth and resources into foreign or even domestic entrepreneurial hands. The Chilean military compensated the Americans for the copper mines, but did not return possession—just as the generals in Brazil, after the takeover in 1964 from the leftist Goulart, did not dream of denationalizing the petroleum, petrochemical, and steel industries. A strong, even central populist streak remains imbedded in all armies, before and after the seizure or power. In Venezuela, for example, many people from the lower as well as middle classes speak quite favorably of the Perez-Jiminez military-dictatorial years which preceded the democratic parliamentary regime of Romulo Bettancourt.

One can see, consequently, that it is hard to say whether the new military are on the Right or on the Left. Their general political preferences are: national independence and vigilance over the nation's cohesion, whether old, as in Asia, or just-emerged, as in Africa; distrust of oligarchs, of the upper middle class (Egypt, Peru, Ethiopia), of foreigners (e.g., in Madagascar, Indonesia); abolition or weakening of the parliamentary system; socialization, education, and the modernization of the transport network in order to increase control over vast and diverse territories. There is a strong effort to uproot, and severely punish, corruption at all levels; this, however, is generally a dismal failure to such an extent that in Indonesia and Nigeria (two random examples) the people fear the soldiers' plunder and bribe-taking as much as or more than they ever feared the colonialists' exactions, which were at least more regular. Furthermore, the military officer in most lands has slipped into the charismatic role of the tribal chief and local elder; nothing is more normal than to bring him, as to the other two, various gifts when one has dealings with him. This is an immemorial custom, hard to discard.

Have the latest events in Portugal contributed any new forms of military behavior? Once we are aware of the "socialist" leanings of the world's military even in the highest ranks, we cannot be surprised by the ideology of the officers' "Movement," not even—although this element is rather novel—by its decision to liquidate the empire. Only one genuine question can be raised with regard to Lisbon: "Will the army accept Communist partnership? and further: Will it eventually accept a Communist regime—in which, inevitably, the army would be a subordinate branch of the Party?

Needless to say, at this point only conjectures and guesses are in order. At present, of the three top men in the regime, one is the Communist Party chief, the other two are military men, the governor of Lisbon and the head of military security, both self-admitted Marxists. Yet this is not sufficient to see them as Party puppets, nor to predict that they will continue enjoying their military comrades' confidence. On the other hand, most of the military officers I met on my various visits to Angola and Mozambique were pure patriots, right-wingers, and Christians; these men, even if many may be under arrest or in camps, cannot have vanished nor can the deeply patriotic spirit of the entire army have disappeared. In a more industrialized nation the military could easily be absorbed in economic life; in Portugal they will probably remain in an army whose leaders, even whose present leaders, cannot afford to let loose thousands of officers and soldiers, potentially dissatisfied trouble makers.

All this means that the Portuguese army has not said the last word yet about the future of its country and about partnership with the Communists. There is little doubt, on the other hand, that a new leftist-military regime is now added to the growing number of (leftist and rightist) military regimes, perhaps one more "socialist" than most. Portugal is then a test case: how far to the Left, towards Marxism, can the military go? The test may not be decided until those who run Portugal have a better grasp than they now have of what will happen in Spain after Franco. It is unlikely that the Communists would risk transforming Portugal into their enclave with a several times stronger and more populous Spain remaining "right-wing" either under Franco or under his successors.

Demoralized in the West

Our last question must be directed at the situation in Western democracies between the civilian State and the Army. Our original premise was that the military are not in the habit of making moves in the direction of power unless the weakness of civilian authority appears to them as a dangerous invitation to internal chaos or to invasion by foreign powers. A further condition is necessary for a Western army to take power: the army in Western countries, unlike that in the Third World, does not have to be a melting pot, nor does it have to possess a near-monopoly on educated personnel and comparatively outstanding technical equipment—but it too must have an *esprit de corps* and a high degree of patriotic consciousness.

It is painfully clear that authority in Western countries today is tottering on the brink of disaster. Entire sections of the population are more or less outside the reach of the nation, its government, and its institutions, or they are moving practically unhindered between the nation and a kind of non-nation in which they constitute themselves somewhere on the undefinable margins. Medieval society had its heretical sects (outside both spiritual and temporal authority), post-Renaissance nations had internal ideological exiles, but in both instances the governments were strong and the spiritual power's support was not in question against those labelled "anti-social" or "antinational." Today the spiritual authority is either antinational itself or simply cannot be located on the nation's panorama, and governmental power is at best sporadic and apologetic, at worst subversive of its own position. The French spring (1968) and autumn (1974) show what the *vacance du pouvoir* may mean, while England, Italy, and the United States contribute their own illustrations.

Indeed, we hear of military discontent with the state of affairs. The noises come at times from America (where the Vietnam war was openly sabotaged), from England (generals organizing vig-

ilante groups and the expeditionary army in Northern Ireland readying itself for making order at home), from Italy (some officers whispering with right-wing groups about a *coup*). But this is about all; the last time in the West that an army could have moved in the national interest, the Algerian crisis in France, it allowed itself to be disarmed by one man, DeGaulle. It seems, then, that in the Western heartland countries the military has suffered the same fate as the government, the churches, the schools, the courts, and the families: an internal demobilization and loss of spirit. For Western ideals Western-type armies seem to be able to fight on the peripheries only: in Rhodesia, in Israel in Vietnam. It is true, in these countries the army is one with the nation, it is a nation in arms. In the rest of the Western countries, the armies are fast degenerating into tolerated parasites, compelled to defend their *raison d'etre* in parliamentary commissions, in the press—and even in advertisements.

This is, however, not the last word about Western armies. Some writers who know history predict the phenomenon of caesarism to spread far and wide, and caesars are inconceivable without armies. If we suppose that socialism is a new kind of militancy, a crossbreed of an industrial frame of mind and military discipline, we should not be astonished if, independently of civilizational background, the left-wing but nationalistic military man becomes the dominant type east, west, and south in the not-too distant future.□

The Business of America

by Jerome M. Rosow

The Human Side of Productivity

Just as it takes two to tango, there are two sides to the inflation equation—too much money chasing too few goods and services. This means that efforts to limit government spending and the supply of credit alone cannot solve the price problem. Indeed, fiscal and monetary restraint create grave risks of triggering cuts in production and causing an increase in unemployment and recession. Of equal importance in fighting inflation are steps to increase total production. One of the best ways is to increase productivity—the amount of goods and services produced by an hour of work.

Even when prices do not rise with each visit to the grocery store, our high and rising standard of living depends on our ability to produce efficiently. A recent *Wall Street Journal* editorial (September 16, 1974) stated: "If labor and management could spend the next forty years, even four years, on ways and means to fuel supply instead of demand we wouldn't have too many dollars chasing too few goods. We wouldn't have surplus labor either."

The United States' need to improve its productivity performance developed well before double-digit inflation. From 1967 to 1973, output per man-hour in the private nonfarm economy rose only about 2 percent a year. If agriculture is included, the rate was slightly better—2.2 percent. This year output has actually fallen as it usually does in an economic downturn because output falls faster than hours worked.

Some of the reasons for the productivity slowdown are short-term. Others are not. The U.S., and indeed the entire world, face long-term factors that will make increases in productivity more difficult to achieve in the future than in the past. Worldwide, a growing population presses on limited resources. The only resources that seem unlimited are people.

Since the mid-1960s U.S. manufacturing productivity increases have lagged behind those of other major industrial powers, though the lag was greater from 1965 to 1970 than since. Some of the recent slowdown reflects a slowdown in agricultural productivity gains; the consolidation of farms into larger units has passed its peak and increasing food needs have brought more and more marginal land into use.

Some of the slowdown reflects concentration of U. S. employment growth in industries where productivity has traditionally been low. These are the labor-intensive trade and service industries in which the methods we have relied on to raise productivity—increased use of machinery and equipment—have had limited application. (In the six years from 1967 to 1973, manufacturing employment fell to 26.2 percent of employment, from 29.5 percent, while employment in government and other services and in retail trade rose from 53.3 percent to 57.1 percent.)

Part of the productivity slowdown has been attributed to a belated effort to reduce pollution and conserve irreplaceable natural resources—in itself a reflection of the growing pressure of population on resources. The damage which concern for the environment inflicts on productivity can be exaggerated, however, especially to the extent that attention to the environment is substituted for emphasis on style changes.

Our slackened increase in manufacturing productivity compared with other countries reflects in part the fact that these countries recently have had proportionately greater increases in capital investment; a related fact is that some of their equipment is newer and reflects later technology than ours.

American management believes increased productivity depends upon technology. Decision-makers often take the human factor for granted. They weaken, rather than strengthen, the influence of people on the production process. Despite this, experts estimate that labor quality contributes up to 30 percent of production increases. In labor-intensive service industries the factor may exceed 70 percent.

Recent developments provide strong evidence that we must pay more attention to the human factor:

1. Changed worker expectations and rising levels of education increase the potential impact of people on the production process. A production strategy that emphasizes automation and excludes human factors cannot take full advantage of this improved potential of people.

2. Workers still support the work ethic. But with increased job security, they are less likely to accept authoritarian control in the workplace and more likely to demand more satisfying work.

3. Even where the workers' contribution to productivity is limited, we must make sure poor morale does not adversely affect product quality, or lead to the waste of time, energy, and materials.

4. The inflation of wages and benefits has increased the unit cost of manpower at all levels, so that the need to increase productivity is greater than ever. At current levels of double-digit wage and benefit increases manpower utilization is a necessity, not a luxury. →

5. Today's growth industries—for example, trade, health care, education, and other services—are labor-intensive. Human factors are the key to increased productivity, better service, and lower cost.

6. Traditional approaches are not paying off as well as in the past; U.S. manufacturing productivity growth is lagging behind that of other countries—our gains are even less than the United Kingdom's; and only about one-third those of Japan.

7. Scarcities of natural resources and other capital are becoming serious, making the value of human resources critical.

8. Productivity bargaining represents a special aspect of collective agreements. These can involve workers and unions together with management in agreeing to major changes in methods and organization to advance efficiency with sharing of the gains.

The human factor in economic performance often holds the key to costs, productivity, prices, and profits. At the same time American workers in all occupational classes seek better work conditions. We must serve the fundamental economic objectives with adequate attention to the quality of life at work. The work ethic in America is alive and well—if anything it is seeking broader and better outlets for its fulfillment. America's productivity challenge is basically a challenge to decision makers—to leaders in business, government, and the universities to engage people in a more effective and meaningful way at the workplace to break down productivity barriers. □

Robert M. Bleiberg

Return to Controls?

Among the spate of bills dropped into the hopper in the waning days of the Ninety-third Congress was one labeled S. 4174, otherwise known as the "Economic Stabilization Act of 1974. "Introduced by Sen. Mike Mansfield (D.-Mont.), the proposed measure among other things authorizes the President of the United States "to issue such orders and regulations as he may deem appropriate to stabilize prices, rents, wages, salaries, profits, dividends, interest rates, and other comparable economic transfers at levels not less than those prevailing on April 30, 1974."

The Chief Executive is also empowered to make "such adjustments as may be necessary to prevent gross inequities"; to allow increases in wages and salaries, "based on the application of cost-of-living and productivity formulas"; and to grant increases in prices, rents, interest rates, profits, or dividends "attributable to higher productivity, efficiency, or sales or revenues." Those who violate any order or regulation under the Act "shall be fined not more than $5,000"; the measure itself is scheduled to expire at midnight on September 30, 1977.

While S. 4174 (along with hundreds of other bills) died stillborn, so to speak, when Congress adjourned in December, more will surely be heard of it in coming months. Peacetime wage and price controls in this country officially expired at midnight on April 30, 1974, but they refuse to rest peacefully in well-deserved limbo. Nor did they die without a struggle. On the contrary, late in April perhaps appalled at the looming prospect of a return to free markets, the Senate Democratic Caucus abruptly called for legislation endowing the Nixon Administration with standby controls authority. On May 1, twelve hours after curbs officially expired, the Senate, while rejecting the Caucus' proposal, voted 44-41 to keep the Cost-of-Living Council in business permanently. Seven days later it reversed its position.

In August, however, Congress made yet another 180-degree turn in policy. Specifically, it approved creation of the Council on Wage and Price Stability, which, though commanding neither subpoena powers nor the rest of the customary bureaucratic arsenal of weapons, is supposed to monitor wages, prices, profits, dividends, interest rates, and "concentration of business power and antitrust practices." The Council has been shrugged off by Sen. Hubert Humphrey (D.-Minn.) as a "toothless tiger in an economic jungle of commodity speculators, oil country wheeler-dealers, and Latin American sugar barons." All it has done so far is to hold inconclusive hearings on sugar. Nonetheless, it may well be the forerunner of an agency with fang and claw.

For in recent weeks, cries for controls have been raised anew in many quarters, political, academic, and (albeit with a touch of embarrassment) business alike. Early in December, at the first midterm convention in party history, the Democrats approved an eight-point economic program which included a call for across-the-board control of prices, wages, executive compensation, profits, and rents, as well as a provision for wage catchups and price rollbacks. They were cheered on by such dedicated statists as Barbara Ward, president of the International Institute for Environment and Development in London, and John Kenneth Galbraith, the avowedly socialist professor at Harvard, who, at a seminar for institutional investors (ironically sponsored by a Wall Street brokerage firm) agreed that controls were "absolutely necessary within the next six months to lower the rate of inflation and stabilize the economy."

Miss Ward went on to urge a long-term wage-price freeze, as well as an "agreed incomes policy that would represent a consensus of democratic society [and] could serve as a possible model for a permanent feature of a market economy." Galbraith, himself a veteran of the Office of Price Administration, observed: "the next time we do this we must be serious about it. Controls must be administered fairly by an organization seriously set up for the purpose which has to be quite large and organized for enforcement."

Perhaps most ominous, spokesmen for private enterprise, many of whom embraced the New Economic Program unveiled by former President Nixon on August 15, 1971, apparently are getting ready to "live with" (as the obscene phrase goes) a revival of controls. At the recent annual meeting of the National Association of Manufacturers in New York City, several corporate executives voiced resigned acceptance of the idea. The Bureau of National Affairs, which interviewed a number of businessmen on an off-the-record basis, uncovered considerable sentiment in favor of such curbs.

For example, BNA quoted a top official of the Marine Midland Bank as follows: "Controls are like the stopper on a pitching staff. You bring them in to stop a losing streak. Used that way, when the timing is right, controls can work." Again, here is what "a partner with an extensive stabilization-related practice at one of Washington's largest law firms" remarked: "Contrary to what they're saying publicly, my clients' business planning is being done on the assumption that we're going to have controls." Another lawyer put it this way: "My clients," he said, "have little faith in controls, but they are getting to the point where they're saying we can't stand any more of this, let's try the controls way again."

Such views, we submit, constitute a triumph of despair over experience. As Louis Rukeyser, who conducts the well-known television program "Wall Street Week," recently quipped in a speech to the National Press Club: "It

was President Nixon who in 1969, 1970, and 1971 kept telling us that wage and price controls would not work, and who then, in 1972, 1973, and 1974, absolutely proved it." From the outset, even in a relatively slack economy, controls led to economic distortions. As business activity began to boom throughout the world, prices of commodities bought and sold on a global basis, like the nonferrous metals, started to rise above domestic ceilings, thereby impelling producers to channel their output abroad and creating artificial shortages at home.

Aluminum is a case in point. Domestic and foreign demand for the light metal recovered in 1972 and in the following year supplies grew tight. In the spring of 1973, the selling price for ingot aluminum finally reached the published price of 25 cents per pound, thereby ending more than three years in which producers sold at discounts below list. Under Phase Four of the price control program, 25 cents served as the official ceiling. Yet, in the last half of 1973, quotations for the light metal abroad climbed to 42 cents per pound. As a consequence, in the last half of 1973, the U.S. became a net exporter of aluminum for the first time since 1970.

Apart from aggravating and creating shortages, controls—as I documented in my Ludwig von Mises Lecture last spring at Hillsdale College—did perhaps their worst damage on the financial scene. Here the harm was inflicted not by the Price Commission, Pay Board, or Cost-of-Living Council, but by a little-known, if highly strategic, part of the controls structure known as the Committee on Interest and Dividends. Headed by Arthur Burns, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, CID, as it was known, early on decreed that corporate dividends could increase by no more than 4 percent per year. In contrast, wages and salaries were allowed to rise by 5½ percent per year.

This was unfair on the face of it. To make matters worse, it aggravated a distortion of several years' standing. From mid-1967 to mid-1972, the Consumer Price Index advanced by 25.4 percent, wages of production workers, by 35 percent. In dismal contrast, dividends on the Standard and Poors' 500 stocks inched ahead by only 5.1 percent, while payments on the Dow Jones Industrials actually declined by 4.5 percent. Dividends, of course, reflect corporate profits, which, until business activity began to pick up in 1972, had been depressed. What the CID decreed, in effect, was that for the first time in history, stockholders should no longer have the privilege of sharing in the fruits of business recovery.

Not surprisingly, investors reacted badly. By placing a lid for more than two years on what shareholders could hope to receive in the way of returns, the Committee on Interest and Dividends must shoulder much of the blame for the sorry showing staged by the stock market since late 1972, the slow disintegration of Wall Street, and, perhaps most significant, the clogging of the customary channels by which corporate enterprise taps the nation's savings.

There is a second count to the indictment. Owing largely to the Committee on Interests and Dividends, the dollar suffered its second official devaluation. The sequence of events began unfolding in the fall of 1972, when Western Europe, beset by mounting inflationary pressures, moved to tighten credit. By the end of that year, the floating rate of the Bank of England had gone from 6 percent to 8 percent, the Bank of France had increased its discount rate twice, from 5¾ percent to 7½ percent. Despite the sharp upward trend of interest rates abroad—one which accelerated in the early months of 1973—the Federal Reserve persistently kept a lid on interest rates at home. Hence the gap between U.S. and foreign interest rates gradually widened to an alarming 300 basis points, or three full percentage points.

In February of 1973, a great confrontation occurred between Dr. Burns and the commercial banking system. When four banks sought to raise the prime rate from 6 percent to 6¼ percent, the Committee on Interests and Dividends reacted angrily. In a not-so-veiled threat of retaliation, it demanded cost and

profit data to "justify" the move. Three of the four banks promptly yielded to government pressure and rescinded the boost, while the fourth held out a few days longer before surrendering.

In a bitter statement, First National City Bank of New York charged that CID high-handedness had aggravated the sinking spell in the dollar. "Such action is interpreted by foreign holders of dollars as being unresponsive to the needs of controlling inflation. Consequently, artificially holding down interest rates is contributing to the weakness of the dollar overseas...." A few days later, the dollar was devalued for the second time officially, and continued to sink in the world's foreign exchange markets for several months more.

Even as they were phased out last spring, wage and price controls left behind another ugly and unwanted legacy: a huge inventory buildup, plainly aimed at jumping the gun on the scheduled expiration date. From the fall of 1973 through spring, stocks in the hands of business climbed at a rate of more than $3 billion per month, or well over $20 billion all told. According to the *Morgan Guaranty Survey*, in January-March of 1974, the rise in "real" inventories (as measured in 1958 prices) other than automobiles ran to more than three times that of the like-1973 period, far and away an all-time first quarter high.

Nor is there much reason to doubt, so the *Survey* suggested, that the heavy accumulation was "voluntary—the product of a deliberate effort by businessmen to add depth to their supplies, and, perhaps, also to beat the rash of price increases expected because of the dismantling of controls." In short, by encouraging business to accumulate huge stocks of goods, controls first caused a vast inventory buildup. When the customers finally balked, accumulation swiftly led to the across-the-board efforts to liquidate which have so savagely begun to depress both production and trade.

Incidentally, the mere threat of controls—by impelling businessmen to raise and keep list prices as high as possible—is doing considerable mischief right now. That was documented at the NAM's annual meeting, where one member after another spoke of raising prices in anticipation of a return to controls. That doesn't mean they're successfully defying the law of supply and demand. On the contrary, discounts from list prices—notably to larger users—are widespread. The result, so one candid vice president concedes, is "perhaps the most widespread violation of the Robinson-Patman Act [which forbids such discrimination] in history." (As Mr. Rukeyser so aptly put it the other day: "Imposing wage and price controls is one of the few vices in life that is nearly as damaging when you talk about it as when you actually do it.")

Just before Election Day, according to the Bureau of National Affairs, several big Washington law firms received calls from out-of-town clients checking on rumors that President Ford was about to announce a pre-Election Day freeze. BNA added that executives have been asking their Washington lawyers for weeks now: "What's the latest date that I can raise prices and be grandfathered against a rollback?" One lawyer, swamped by such queries, observed: "December may be a very bad month for the price indices, partly because of these anticipatory price actions." The presence of controls on the books from mid-1971 through early 1974 kept the official price indices artificially low. Today, by a not-so-fine irony, the threat that controls may be reimposed at any time is keeping the indices artificially high.

Wage and price controls, in short, have bred one economic disaster after another, and yet the push to revive them presses relentlessly on. Some observers see controls as inevitable in 1975, and, in view of the political realities and widespread economic ignorance of the American people (more than half of whom, according to the latest Gallup Poll, favor such curbs), only a bold or foolhardy man would bet heavily against them. Yet all is not necessarily lost. Even as academics and politicos keep up the hue and cry against the ravages of

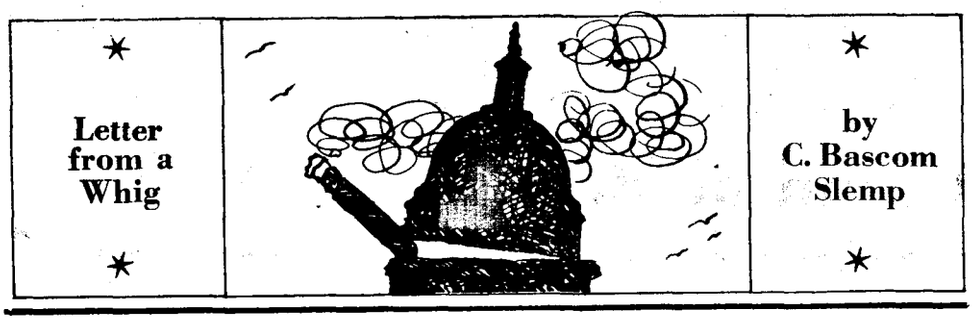
inflation, the spiral is perceptibly weakening. Indeed, with a speed that has shocked most observers, notably those in Washington, D.C., who are usually the last to know, the decline in business activity has begun to leave its mark on wages and prices alike.

Layoffs, of course, are mounting apace, and the rise in unemployment already has begun to blunt labor's demands. In Buffalo, for example, Plasterers and Lathers locals have agreed to a one-year wage freeze. Pilots working for troubled Pan American World Airways have accepted an 11 percent, one-year reduction in wages. In order to save the jobs of 100 colleagues or so, editorial and business employees of the *Washington Star-News* recently voted 347-44 to go on a four-day work week at a 20 percent cut in pay. Even more striking, members of the militant unions which deal with the City of New York, faced by the prospect of widespread layoffs for the first time since the Great Depression, are weighing the acceptance of pay cuts.

As to prices, softening is visible across-the-board. Even the official Wholesale Price Index, artificially ballooned (as noted above) by a wave of list price hikes, in November showed a decline in its rate of annual increase from well over 20 percent to 14 percent. Official statistics aside, quotations for copper, waste paper, steel scrap, and a host of other industrial commodities have declined lately. Even farm products and foods, where inflation has run rampant, have begun to ease. From a peak of 430 in mid-November, the Dow Jones Commodity Futures Index by year-end had plunged to 350.

Just a few weeks ago, the Council on Wage and Price Stability held two-day hearings on the unprecedented surge in the price of sugar; since then, sugar has declined sharply at the commodity, wholesale, and retail levels alike. While the U.S. Department of Agriculture predicts further rises in food prices next year, it's significant that a number of leading supermarket chains, including Kroger and Great Atlantic & Pacific, have decreed price freezes of their own in coming months. What that suggests is that some of the shrewdest merchants in the world are convinced that prices are more likely to decline than to rise. And according to *Women's Wear Daily*, which ought to know, dress houses are trimming prices as much as 20 percent for spring. "Paving the way for the decreases are lower prices of fabrics, reflecting drops at the fiber and yarn level, as well as distress selling by mills."

The workings of the marketplace, in sum, may write finis to demands for wage and price controls. If so, one can only say, along with Shakespeare, "Sweet are the uses of adversity...." □



A Vanishing Species

(Washington)—According to a recent press report GOP Mayor Jack Hunter of Youngstown, Ohio, asked his congressman, Democrat Charles J. Carney, to introduce legislation adding Republican office holders to the list of endangered species.

After the November elections it is going to take more than a citation on an endangered species list to save the Grand Old Party.

The foreboding prophecies which political pundits cast for the Republicans turned out to be well-founded, as the Democrats recorded a net gain of some forty-three seats in the House, three in the Senate, and five in the Governors' mansions.

Initial election returns revealed further that Republicans were saved from losing seven additional congressional seats in four states by less than 5,000 votes.

With a voting age population of approximately 145,000,000 and a turnout of only about 53,000,000 (roughly 38 percent) voter apathy was clearly rampant. In the last off-year elections approximately 48 per cent of the voting population had voted.

Preliminary figures from the Republican National Committee revealed that about 23,000,000 Republicans voted (16 percent of the voting age population), and 30,000,000 Democrats (21 percent of the voting age population). Voter figures for the Congressional races alone were even lower than for the Senate and Gubernatorial races. Approximately 43,000,000 Americans voted in the Congressional races, or about 30 percent.

It has been speculated that the GOP was particularly hurt because it was the Republican voters (who normally come out to vote in droves) who stayed home, but the RNC has yet to analyze sample precincts to see whether in fact this was the case.

Even without Watergate and the dismal state of the economy political stategists and commentators would have expected the GOP to lose Congressional seats—political wisdom holds that the party in the White House will lose substantially in a midterm election. But 1974 was no more a normal political year than was 1972.

Despite the Nixon landslide in 1972 there had been no coattail effect for the Republicans. The GOP picked up only twelve seats in the House and, in fact, even lost two Senate seats. In the recent elections, then, the GOP did not lose what are normally considered marginal seats. Instead, the Democrats made strong inroads into traditional Republican districts.

The Democratic win was a clear across-the-boards victory; it included victories in every region of the country (reversing the Republican gains in the South in recent years). Particularly damaging for the GOP was the loss of fifteen seats in the Republican Midwest (Indiana, once the Heartland for the Iron Guard, alone lost five Republican Congressmen) and the loss of nine seats in the South, where the GOP had been making inroads since 1952.

Democratic gains also included an expansion upon the old New Deal coalition (low-income, blue-collar, Catholics, blacks, and ethnics). The Democrats now won in rural areas as well as the wealthy suburbs, a traditional GOP stronghold.

Not too surprising, but perhaps of far reaching consequences, some 64 percent of the votes by those younger than thirty-four went to Democratic candidates.

The new party line-ups in Congress give the Democrats 291 seats in the House (slightly over the two-thirds figure needed for a veto) as compared with 144 Republicans. In the Senate there are 61 Democrats (six votes short of a two-thirds majority) and 39 Republicans.

While American parliamentarians have traditionally voted less on straight party lines than their European counterparts, there can be no doubt that the Ninety-fourth Congress will experience a shift to the Left. If Democrats outnumber Republicans by two to one, liberals will probably outnumber conservatives (including Louisiana Democrat Joe Waggoner's Conservative Southern Caucus) by nearly three to one.

Liberal Democrats, under the influence

of the Democrat Study Group, have been wresting control of their party in Congress away from the Southern conservatives. A power struggle on the Republican side of the aisle has also been underway. Under the guidance of Rep. John Anderson (Ill.) liberal Republicans sent out trial balloons challenging the more conservative Republican leadership.

Columnists Evans and Novak, who are well known for writing planted columns, spoke of the devastating defeat suffered by "stone age" Republicans, and the new found strength of the "courageous feisty moderate" Republicans.

As part of a power play Anderson staffers charged that the conservative House Republican Steering Committee had lost thirty of its seventy members. However, while there can be no doubt that important conservative losses resulted from the election, including Republican Steering Committee Chairman Lamar Baker (Tenn.), as well as three Vice Chairmen (Blackburn, Ga.; Dennis, Ind.; and Huber, Mich.), the losses for the Steering Committee are approximately equal to those for the GOP as a whole.

In fact, of the ninety-five Steering Committee members sixteen lost their reelection bids, and six retired. Furthermore, of the seventeen newly elected GOP House members at least six are expected to become dues-paying members of the Steering Committee.

In response to the sniping from the Republican Left, and the widespread press coverage their charges received, Ed Feulner, the Executive Director of the Steering Committee dashed off his own clarifying memo, and was able to halt any erosion in the Committee's ranks. The 1974 election, as Feulner stated, was a defeat for Republicans, and since conservatives are the Republican mainstream they had their share of the losses; but the GOP defeat was not a defeat for conservative Republicans only.

While Democrats seek to build on the substantial political advantages they accrued in the elections the Republicans are faced with rebuilding their own party. Many GOP conservatives believe that their party can no longer merely shadow the goals of the Democratic Party, but instead must establish clear-cut alternatives. If the GOP fails many leading conservatives see a third party move as imminent (despite Reagan's personal disavowal).

Sen. Jim Buckley, M. Stanton Evans, Howard Phillips, and other leading conservatives are calling on the GOP to embrace conservative principles. The American Conservative Union and Young Americans for Freedom are co-sponsoring a political action conference to be held in Washington in February, and this promises to bring more leading conservatives to the Federal enclave than the city has experienced in recent years.

The political future promises to be interesting. If the problems before the nation were not so serious the extravaganza about to unfold could make an enjoyable tragicomedy, for neither the Democratic nor the Republican Party received a vote of much confidence from the American electorate. □

Book Review/William Kristol

A Man of Honor

William Buckley's *United Nations Journal* is a depressing book. Buckley effectively portrays, with grace and wit, shunning harsh polemics or apocalyptic predictions, this organization characterized by stultifying hypocrisy, shameless irresponsibility, and moral cowardice, and made more disheartening and repulsive by the fact that its character results entirely from the freely-chosen words and actions of its members.

Yet it is not the UN itself that is so depressing. After all, one would have to hold a preposterously high opinion of the various rulers of mankind to be surprised by their performance in the UN; to be surprised, for example, that "while as a legislative body it is useless, and while as a debating body it is invaluable, it does a great deal of legislating and absolutely no debating"; or to be surprised by the hypocrisy Buckley identifies as the UN's salient characteristic. What is most depressing about Buckley's book is his suggestion of the extent to which U.S. participation in and support of the UN serve to corrupt us. We accommodate ourselves to the UN, for example, by refusing even to raise the issue of the exclusion of Israel from UNESCO, a blatant violation of the UN charter, because we do not have the votes. We debase our public discourse by obeying the UN convention simply to ignore Soviet infractions of the stated ideals of the organization, and "not merely against those ideals that are tucked away in the old idealisms of the venerable documents of the very early years. But to ignore those that are being hotly debated at the very moment." This disregard, according to Buckley, "becomes something in which everyone is automatically trained; even as, say, altogether spontaneous conversation deploring drunkenness will take place in households in which a principal is an alcoholic; after a while, nobody notices."

Buckley does not call for a liberal democratic crusade to free the world, nor for a liberal democratic absolutist stance vis-a-vis the rest of the world. He does suggest that it is not inconsistent for the United States to negotiate constructively with the Soviets on several matters while at the same time maintaining in public debates on questions of human rights "a dogged position seeking to reaffirm the ideals of the United Nations." This sound advice has usually been neglected either in favor of moralistic crusading or mere accommodation, or worse, a perverse combination of both.

United Nations Journal: A Delegate's Odyssey

by William F. Buckley, Jr.
Putnam $7.95

The kind of stance Buckley suggests is difficult to find and hold; moralistic commitment or what Buckley calls "moral evasion" are easier positions for nations to maintain. These days, the moralistic commitment seems to be all on the side of the terrorists; while moral evasion seems to be increasingly the stance of the nations of the free world, whose abstaining votes in the UN are only one manifestation of their policy or lack of it. In the debate on the exclusion of South Africa, only Baroody of Saudi Arabia had the courage to point out a simple truth: "I want also to draw the attention of my colleagues, regardless of whether they come from Africa, Asia, or from anywhere else, to another point. Unfortunately, there are many governments that are not representative of their people. In every-day jargon we call them dictatorships. I am not going to mention names—God help me if I were to. I believe there are about three or four dozen of them...." (There are about ten dozen of them.) This instance of utterly shocking candor at the UN could only be said by a comic figure like Baroody.

The "genuine outrage" felt by Buckley and others at the baseness and hypocrisy of the UN may not be the best guide for the making of foreign policy; but such outrage cannot and should not be ignored, for it is justified, and represents at least in part our attachment to a notion

of decency and justice. As Buckley writes, it is only 'by distinguishing between life in the United States and life in the Soviet Union that one generates the energy to resist the sovietization of American life. The United Nations is the most concentrated assault on moral reality in the history of free institutions, and it does not do to ignore that fact, or worse, to get used to it." How can the United States avoid moral obtuseness on the one hand, while acknowledging the claims of prudence in foreign policy on the other?

Buckley refrains from setting forth his own conclusive answers to this question; rather he ends his *Journal* by printing a once-confidential cable from Daniel P. Moynihan, which expresses "concern not only at the emergence of an anti-democratic bias at the United Nations, but at the curious seeming acceptance by the United States that there is nothing to be done about it, indeed that it is scarcely even to be protested save by men such as Scali...from outside the system." Moynihan, who preceded Buckley as a public member in the U.S. delegation to the UN, recollects "the fury with which I sat in the General Assembly and listened to the Stalinist son of a bitch from Cuba go on.... But still it was his job. He is a Stalinist. He works for a Stalinist. He can get killed if he makes a mistake. What drove me to despair was the complacency of our putative allies in this matter. The honor of American democracy was being impugned? What is honor? said our allies. Let us talk of malaria eradication, and aid levels.... We seem to be willing to forget about a clear violation of the charter, a direct lie about the United States. What has come over us? Forget about a slander on our honor? What have we become? Any, repeat any, country that does not support us on a matter of this consequence not only damages the United Nations, but must quietly be brought to understand it has damaged itself. I looked down the list of those who go along and those who go along by abstaining. In half of them the present regime would collapse without American support or American acquiescence. To hell with it. Something specifically bad should happen to each one of them, and when it has happened they should be told that Americans take the honor of their democracy most seriously...."

Moynihan's anger at our allies is surely justified; but as he himself suggests, their neglect of our honor has to an extent only followed our own neglect. And it is our neglect of our honor that may help explain our evident quandary in foreign policy, which stems from the insufficiency of either moralism or mere putative realpolitik. In suggesting the need for a concern with honor, Moynihan —and Buckley— may have been thinking of Churchill's advice in *The Gathering Storm* with respect to the "tormenting dilemmas" nations face in foreign policy: "There is, however, one helpful guide, namely, for a nation to keep its word and to act in accordance with its treaty obligations to allies. This guide is called honor." Churchill suggests that a sense of honor is the necessary prerequisite for a foreign policy that is practical and yet not unprincipled, that is neither willful nor supine.

Honor may be a quality unsuited to a democratic society and a democratic age; one could substitute self-respect. But the various trends of our age—intellectual, social, political—seem to have come together in helping to corrode individuals' sense of self-respect in favor of either a desire to lose oneself in the mass or (and the two are not mutually exclusive) a desire for mere "expression" of a "self" whatever the worth of that expression or self. Self-respect seems to be necessarily based on a sense of man's elevation, which in turn rests on a sense that there are standards by which men can be judged elevated and that there are elevating achievements. It is Buckley's great merit and honor, far more, I believe, than his position on any particular issues, that he has stood and fought on the side of human dignity and self-respect against the many and powerful forces of our age which would debase man. For this above all we admire him and are grateful. □

Messing up Ma Bell

Last November, the Antitrust Division of the United States Department of Justice filed suit in federal court to break up the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. The government is charging that AT&T has "conspired" with its various subsidiaries to restrict competition in the telecommunications industry, and claims that the only solution to this problem lies in splitting up the company. Specifically, the Justice Department insists first, that AT&T divest Western Electric, a wholly owned subsidiary that serves as the manufacturing and supply unit of the Bell System, and that Western then be divided into at least two competing firms; and second, that AT&T's profitable Long Lines Division, which currently handles some 90 percent of the nation's long distance telephone calls, be split off from the parent company. Should these measures prove insufficient, the government is holding in reserve the possibility of making AT&T sell the Bell Laboratories, its research and development organization. If successful, the suit would force the most radical government shakeup of a major industry in the history of the country. At the very least, it is the most significant antitrust action since the United States took on the first John D. Rockefeller's personal fiefdom and broke up Standard Oil.

Now, antitrust actions have, by their very nature, a certain populist appeal. The nation's first laws on the subject, the Sherman and Clayton Acts, were passed in an era when the Rockefellers and J.P. Morgans of the earth seemed, in the popular mind, capable of taking into their own hands control of most of American industry. Teddy Roosevelt discovered early on that one of the most popular sermons one could preach from that "Bully Pulpit," known more prosaically as the Presidency, centered around the evils of Robber Barons, and he proceeded to cultivate an image as a swashbuckling trust-buster which, deserved or not, remains a central feature of his historical reputation. Even aside from the political advantages of being on the side of the angels in any battle that pits big vs. little or rich vs. poor, it is textbook economics that monopolies maximize profits by restricting output below the levels which would prevail in a competitive market, thereby creating artificial shortages and inflated prices.

So on the surface, an antitrust action against an admitted monopoly that did some $25.53 billion in business last year seems squarely in the mainstream of governmental efforts to preserve free competition. The Justice Department itself is at pains to so characterize the suit; as one spokesman has claimed, "the purpose of this suit" is simply "to make the industry competitive, and that is what we're going to do." Senator Phillip Hart (D.-Mich.) has gone further, praising the action as indicating a willingness "to

work on a basic problem of the economy—the structure of a most significant industry." And President Gerald Ford took the time in a recent press conference to reassure skeptics that, as he understood it, the suit was instituted not because AT&T is "big," but rather because it had "broken the law."

I hesitate to quarrel with the cogent grasp of economics revealed by this little gem of Presidential analysis, especially since a discourse on the economics of the telephone industry is hardly the most intriguing subject matter with which to fill a column. Nevertheless, I think it is important at this juncture to examine the merits of what the Justice Department proudly proclaims is the largest antitrust suit ever brought. What emerges from that examination, however, makes one wonder exactly what there is to be proud about. For this suit, far from being directed at a wasteful, inefficient, profit-guzzling, and illegal behemoth, is instead aimed at an efficient and innovative industry, a necessary and tightly regulated monopoly whose performance stands as one of the few bright spots in a seriously troubled economy. And while the potential threat the action poses to the stability of this industry is disturbing enough, the stupidity of devoting a huge chunk of government resources to such a thoroughly misguided cause raises even more serious questions about the capacity of this administration to deal with what is fondly known as "our current economic crisis."

Before embarking on a review of the performance of the Bell System, it is worth pausing for a moment to consider the overall structure of the industry itself. Previously, I noted that the evils of monopoly were a matter of "textbook economics." However, as anyone who has read his Samuelson can tell you, the necessity of monopoly for certain types of industry is an equally fundamental tenet of modern economic theory. Basically, the telecommunications business has at least two features which make monopoly the most efficient means of providing telephone service. First, it requires levels of capital outlay so high that investment by more than one firm would yield both wasteful overcapacity and concomitantly higher prices to consumers. Second, the necessity of developing a truly national communications network demands the kind of planning and coordination that is realistically possible only with unified management. While it is at least conceivable that public ownership might provide the answer to these problems, the federal government showed for once both proper respect for the abilities of private industry and a corresponding awareness of its own limitations when it decided how to deal with the phone monopoly. Accordingly, the communications legislation passed by Congress in the 1930s contemplated precisely the situation that now obtains—namely, a private monopoly, but subject to regulation by the Federal Communications Commission and similar state agencies to guard against the possibility of monopoly pricing.

Thus, any fair evaluation of AT&T would question not the industry's monopoly structure, but rather the company's performance given that structure. Surely the government would not attempt anything as drastic as breaking up the phone company unless the service being provided were seriously wanting in at least some respects. Perhaps the Bell System has exploited its monopoly position by piling up huge profits, despite regulation? Perhaps lack of competition has bred industry-wide complacency, leading to technological and developmental stagnation? Or maybe consumer prices have simply become too high? One looking for justifications for the suit against AT&T will search these avenues in vain. The FCC keeps if anything an overscrupulous eye on the activities of Ma Bell, and profits hover with remarkable consistency at a discreet 7 percent, give or take a few points. Nationwide direct distance dialing, expansion, and innovation that have kept pace with skyrocketing demand, intercontinental telecommunications satellites, and a host of other developments which someone with more expertise than the current author could document make any theory of technological stagnation laughable. And while the phone company has felt the pinch of higher labor costs and other inflationary pressures along with all other industry, its prices have hardly risen at an astonishing rate. Indeed, long distance telephone calls stand as an almost solitary example of an important service whose price has gone *down* over the last twenty years.

Great American Series

"Mr. Watson, come here, I want you."
—Alexander Graham Bell

The first intelligible words ever transmitted by telephone, March 10, 1876.

What then is the theory behind the suit? It amounts to little more than the following: "The need for monopoly at the operating level doesn't require monopoly at the manufacturing stage. Hence, spinning off and splitting up Western Electric (and letting other companies get into the act if they want to) can bring the benefits of competition to the actual manufacturing of telephone equipment. Moreover, long distance service is sufficiently separate from the rest of the Bell System to permit independent operation, and this avoids giving AT&T any more control than is absolutely essential. Similarly, there may be no reason for keeping Bell Labs within the system."

This is a rather scanty, speculative basis for messing with a successful industry, and it turns out that even these arguments are implausible. First, the assertion that AT&T doesn't need its own manufacturing and supply unit ignores the need for uniform, conforming equipment that is prerequisite to a technologically sensitive electronics system of nationwide scope. In addition, theoretical arguments about the virtues of free competition are simply false in this instance. Touche, Ross & Co., the prestigious accounting firm that examined the relationship between Western Electric and the Bell operating companies at the behest of the FCC, concluded straightforwardly that the combination resulted in reduction of both cost and investment. Moreover, the firm noted that Western's overall operation was marked by high quality, low costs, quick delivery, and reasonable prices—which would-be competitors could not hope to match. Second, the naive belief that long distance can be feasibly separated from the rest of the system not only takes for granted the virtues of the unified network such action would destroy, but also overlooks the role Long Lines plays in keeping down costs in other areas. Even with cheap rates, AT&T has kept long distance efficient and profitable enough to enable the company to offer regular service at reduced prices. Finally, the possible severing of Bell Labs, in addition to revealing a certain governmental ingratitude toward an operation that has made significant contributions to defense and space technology as well as pure communications, might well result in the loss of a valuable facility. Like most large-scale research and development units, Bell Labs requires steady infusions of capital from a reliable source. Divorced from AT&T, it is likely that the Labs would either go under, or (perhaps worse) come under the benevolent tutelage of the federal government.

So there you have it—the largest antitrust suit in history. It is a suit virtually devoid of economic justification. It threatens to destroy what AT&T board chairman John D. deButts has aptly called a "unique national resource." And to top it off, the Justice Department even admits that it doesn't know if the action will improve anything. As the *Wall Street Journal* noted in a highly critical editorial in its November 22, 1974 issue, "the Justice Department can't promise any consumer benefits that might result from its suit to break up AT&T." One spokesman for the Antitrust Division, quoted in the December 2, 1974 issue of *Newsweek*, was even more blunt: "If lower prices don't result from freer competition, well, so be it."

The one bright spot on the horizon is that deButts, who does not appear to come from the mold that has produced so many self-consciously "concerned," apologetic executives of late, has pledged to fight this one to the end. Hopefully, he will stick to it even when Justice comes slinking around in three or four years trying to salvage some face-saving

compromise out of what is sure to prove a Departmental debacle. But even if AT&T survives unscathed, the whole affair has already produced some serious doubts about the administration, and in particular, about the current occupant of the White House. He has noted, and commendably so, that our economy poses the most serious problems we currently face. He has promised to fight inflation—a problem that springs from decades of deficit spending, years of half-hearted but expensive military intervention in Southeast Asia, overweening power on the part of organized labor, and myriad other causes for which Gerald Ford is hardly responsible. In this effort he deserves both understanding and cooperation. But to acquiesce in, if not actively promote, a misdirected attack on one of the strongest sectors of the economy is hardly the act of a man with the seriousness and intelligence needed to guide the nation from a recession. At best, as even the usually understated *Wall Street Journal* has charged, it is little more than "political grandstanding"—and moreover, it is grandstanding that will alienate large numbers of people who would otherwise be sympathetic to a Republican administration. This is hardly what either we or the President need, and one hopes we shall see no more of it. □

Book Review/Benjamin Stein

James Dean Is Not Dead

A few years ago, a lot of people were asking, "Is God dead?" It depends on what they meant by God. If they meant the God of millions of teenagers of every age from 1955 to the present moment, then the answer is that JAMES DEAN IS NOT DEAD.

Of all the popular cultural figures of the postwar period, none comes so close to being the living Holy Ghost as James Byron Dean. In the three movies he made before his death in a flaming crash in Paso Robles, California, James Dean established himself as the Angel of Youth personified, so powerful and magnetic that death could not make him die.

It was not just blind coincidence. James Dean had within his life the elements to make himself a great actor, a tortured and tormented person who could put it across on the stage, on television, and on the silver screen. When viewers saw him as the jealous and violent Cal Trask in *East of Eden*, the ambivalent, confused, and groping Jim Stark in *Rebel Without A Cause*, and the grasping, vindictive, and self-destructive Jett Rink in *Giant*, they were seeing the real James Dean. He had the gift of not hiding his real personality when he appeared before an audience. And his real personality was in almost constant torment.

James Dean was born in 1931 in Marion, Indiana, making him, almost certainly, the most famous Hoosier of the rock generation. After a few months, he moved to a small farming town, Fairmount, Indiana. He only lived there for a few years until his father, a dental technician, was transferred to a VA hospital in Los Angeles. He lived there, an only child, the apple of his mother's eye, until he was nine.

His mother had great artistic ambitions for him, and taught him that he was special, that he was talented, that he could do anything. He learned to draw, to play the violin and the piano, and to feel loved. Then his mother contracted cancer and died. It was a supertrauma for James, from which he never recovered.

He went back on the train to Fairmount with the casket and stayed there to live with his aunt and uncle. But after that, although he lived in the most all-American, wholesome type of environment imaginable, he became fixated on attracting attention. He became severely manic-depressive, loving, withdrawn, angry, and desperate to stand out. He went into athletics in a big way. (Despite his relative shortness [5' 8"], his high school yearbook noted, "Jim is our regular basketball guy, and when you're around him time will fly.") He became a championship debater, dramatic reader, and actor.

After he graduated from high school, he went out to Sunny Cal to live with his father and stepmother. He was then nineteen, and from then on, he bent every effort to making himself a star. He first got no parts, then tiny parts in Hollywood. He moved to New York City, got some small parts in theatrical productions and live television drama, then got into the prestigious Actor's Studio.

James Dean:
The Mutant King
by David Dalton
Straight Arrow $9.95

James Dean:
A Short Life
by Venable Herndon
Doubleday $7.95

He got larger parts as a young man kept in a cage, and as a homosexual Arab, then was discovered by Elia Kazan and cast for *East of Eden*. From that moment, he was a meteor. He made three movies within less than twelve months, and barely a year after achieving stardom, lay dead in a roadside gully, inside a Porsche Spyder.

He had first started drawing fans in California when he was nineteen years old (he played John the Baptist in a television drama and a local Catholic girls' school formed a fan club) and he kept attracting them at a geometric rate until and after his death.

Evidence that the cult is far from moribund comes in two new books about James Dean. Both came out at the end of the summer, both are selling well, both are chock full of information, but one is merely a mediocre biography, while the other is a pretentious, hero-worshipping bad joke.

The former, *James Dean: A Short Life* by Venable Herndon, is, ounce for ounce, far better than the latter, *James Dean: The Mutant King* by David Dalton, for what it lacks, rather than for what it has. Both books adequately explain how James Dean could symbolize youth's anguish, sense of loss, bitterness, hope, and despair, (and other good things) in terms of his psychological scarring as a child. But the Dalton book tends to wax poetic and ridiculous to cover up for just having the same old facts that *Photoplay* readers knew all along.

Some of this hyperbole is authentically comic. Dalton has this capsule summation of Indiana: "...plainness is a native virtue of Indiana. It means that by your roots you 'grow up straight and strong' (as Alan Ladd advised Brandon de Wilde in *Shane*)...."

In another place, Dalton tells us about a poorly defined photograph of Dean, but refuses to stop there: "The almost total absence of detail in this photograph gives it the spectral quality of a psychic event, as if this thing of indeterminate mass and frequency had nosed up to the glass to look at its fleeting reflection, an opalescent image wandering through insubstantial space, which then departed back into its murky magnetic world and rubbed a white shadow of James Dean from the screen to leave us a ghastly orthicon image on the pane of time."

Such writing adds literally nothing but the all too clear image of a pretentious, artsy-craftsy writer saying nothing with a great deal of wind. Unfortunately, this is typical of Dalton's style. It all adds up to powerful advice to skip his book and go for the thinner but far more substantial

tome of Venable Herndon. Although Herndon somehow manages to blame Dean's death on Joe McCarthy and Richard Nixon, he at least takes the time to make sure that there are no pomposities or spelling errors such as those which stud every other page of Dalton's work (my favorite was Dalton's misuse of "exoterically speaking").

Herndon also examines Dean's life far more closely in the crucial time when he was just starting out as an actor than does Dalton. He does not hide Dean's many homosexual adventures, for example, how he offered his body to homosexual big wheels in the entertainment business in exchange for help in his career. While those escapades do not add or detract from Dean's talent and attraction as a cult figure, they are certainly interesting and important as parts of the life of a sex symbol.

After reading both books, the reader knows a great deal about James Dean and has each biographer's theory about why James Dean is a cult figure. Dalton says that he was the first "mutant," a creature belonging neither to the old generation nor to the children of the old generation, but rather a new species, and that the teenagers of the 1950s were also mutants and they recognized him as their leader. Herndon says that Dean, like other great cult figures, was obsessed with pushing things to their limits and that the crowd loves to see a daredevil—whether in daring to bare his emotions and needs or to drive his Porsche along Route 5 at over 100 miles per hour.

But for this reader at least, the mystery lingers on. Why is James Dean a legend? Why does he electrify one generation after another of viewers? Why, even in the fall and winter of 1974, do popular singers use him in their lyrics?

It has something to do with the feeling of torment that one gets out of his face. He looks like all those medieval portraits of the suffering Christ. He has the look, the feel of an angel who, through no fault of his own, has been made to suffer and has become a little twisted by it. Perhaps it is a feeling that we have about ourselves and James Dean is an idealized version of ourselves, and that is why we love him so. Perhaps the connection is so obvious between James Dean and our own self-pity that we idealize our self-pity in him.

In any event, the cult of James Dean lives on. He would be forty-four today if he had lived, and perhaps he would be doing $100,000 a week shows at the International in Las Vegas instead of being a living god. But that's show business. □

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A Libertarian's Basic Repertoire

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by Ralph Raico

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Ludwig von Mises

It is said that a number of years ago, when Bill Buckley was at the beginning of his career of college-speaking, he once wrote two names on the blackboard and thereby nicely dramatized the point that students in his audience were being presented with only one side of the great world-forming debate between capitalism and socialism. The name of the defender of democratic socialism (I think it was Harold Laski, possibly John Dewey) was recognized by most of those present. The name of Ludwig von Mises was entirely unknown to them. Needless to say, the situation has not basically improved since then (unless perhaps in the sense that most college students would now recognize the name of William F. Buckley, Jr.). How has it been possible that the great majority of economics and social science students, even at elite American universities, are completely unfamiliar with Mises? Even the *New York Times*, in its notice at the time of his death in October 1973, termed Mises "one of the foremost economists of this century," and Milton Friedman, though from a completely different tradition of economic thought, has called him "one of the great economists of all time."

But Mises was even more than a great economist. Throughout the world, among knowledgeable people—in German-speaking Europe, in France, in Britain, in Latin America, in our own country—Mises was famous as *the* great twentieth century champion of a school of thought which could be said to have a certain historical importance and a certain intellectual respectability: the one that began with Adam Smith, David Hume, and Turgot, and included Humboldt, Bentham, Benjamin Constant, Tocqueville, Acton, Carl Menger, Pareto, and many others. Offhand, one would have thought that this acknowledged position alone would have entitled Mises to being presented within the "pluralistic" setting of left-liberal Academe.

And then there were Mises' scientific achievements, which were extraordinary. For example, it is conceded on all sides that in the whole discussion revolving around the viability of a system of central economic planning, Mises played the key role. Quite possibly the great intellectual scandal (still unadmitted) of the past century has been that the vast international Marxian movement, including thousands upon thousands of professional thinkers in all fields, was for generations content to discuss the whole issue of capitalism vs. socialism solely in terms of the alleged defects of *capitalism*. The question of how, and how well, a *socialist* economy would function, was avoided as taboo. It was Mises' accomplishment—and a sign of his superb independence of mind—to have brushed aside this pious "one-just-doesn't-speak-of-such-things," and to have presented comprehensively and arrestingly the problems inherent in attempting rational economic calculation in a situation where no market exists for production goods. Anyone familiar with the structural problems with which the more advanced Communist countries are continually faced and with the debate over "market socialism," will perceive the significance of Mises' work in this field alone.

How then can we account for the fact that those who managed to take a Laski and a Thorstein Veblen—or even a Walter Lippmann and a Kenneth Galbraith—seriously as important social philosophers somehow could never bring themselves to familiarize their students with Mises or to show him the marks of public recognition and respect that were his due (he was, for example, never president of the American Economic Association)? At least part of the answer, I think, lies in what Jacques Rueff, in a warm tribute, called Mises' "intransigence." Mises was a complete doctrinaire and a relentless and implacable fighter for his doctrine. For over sixty years he was at war with the spirit of his age, and with every one of the advancing, victorious, or merely modish political schools, left and right. The totality and enduring intensity of his battle could only be fueled from a profound inner sense of the truth and supreme value of the ideas for which he was struggling. This (as well as his temperament, one supposes) helped produce a definite "arrogance" in his tone (or "apodictic" quality, as some of us in the Mises seminar fondly called it, using one of his own favorite words), which was the last thing academic left-liberals and social democrats could accept in a defender of a view they considered only marginally worthy of toleration to begin with. (This would largely account, I think, for the somewhat

greater recognition that has been accorded Friedrich Hayek, even before his greatly deserved Nobel Prize. Hayek is temperamentally much more moderate in expression than Mises ever was, preferring, for instance, to avoid the old slogan of "laissez faire." And it is hard to imagine Mises making such a gesture as Hayek did in dedicating *The Road to Serfdom* "to socialists of all parties.")

But the lack of recognition seems to have influenced or deflected Mises not in the least. Instead, he continued his work, decade after decade: accumulating contributions to economic theory; developing the theoretical structure of the Austrian School (which one may read about in Murray Rothbard's very lucid and intelligent little book, *The Essential Von Mises*); and, from his understanding of the laws of economic activity, elaborating, correcting, and bringing up to date the great social philosophy of classical liberalism.

Now, within the classical liberal tradition, distinctions may be drawn. One very important one is between what may be termed "conservative" and "radical" liberals. Mises belonged to the second category, and on this basis may be contrasted to writers, for instance, such as Macaulay, Tocqueville, and Ortega y Gasset. There was very little of the Whig about Mises. The vaunted virtues of aristocracies; the alleged need for a religious basis for "social cohesion"; the reverence for tradition (it was somehow always *authoritarian* traditions that were to be reverenced, and never the traditions of free thought and rebellion); the fear of the emerging "mass-man," who was spoiling things for his intellectual and social betters; the whole cultural critique that later provided a substantial foothold for the attack on the consumer society—these found no place in Mises' thinking. To take an example, Tocqueville, in *Democracy in America,* at one point cries out: "Nothing conceivable is so petty, so insipid, so crowded with paltry interests —in a word, so anti-poetic—as the life of a man in the United States." Whether or not this judgment is true, Mises would never have bothered to make it. As a utilitarian liberal, he had more respect for the standards by which ordinary people judge the quality of their own lives. It is highly doubtful that Mises felt any of the qualms of liberals like Tocqueville at the Americanization of the world. (In fact, their attitude towards America would be a good rough criterion for categorizing a classical liberal as "radical" or "conservative.") Mises, then, was *radical* liberal, in the line of the Philosophical Radicals and the men of Manchester.

All the elements of radical liberalism are there: first of all, and most basic, his uncompromising rationalism, reiterated again and again. (Symptomatic of Mises' avoidance of everything he would consider mystical and obscurantist in social thought is the fact that, to my knowledge, he never in all his published writings once mentions Edmund Burke except in the context of someone who, in alliance with writers like de Maistre, was ultimately a philosophical opponent of the developing liberal world.) There is his utilitarianism, taking the end of politics to be not "the good," but *human welfare,* as men and women individually define it for themselves. There is his championing of *peace,* which in the tradition of those nineteenth century liberals most closely identified with the doctrine of complete laissez faire—Richard Cobden, John Bright, Frédéric Bastiat, and Herbert Spencer—he bases on the economic substructure of free trade. And, more surprising, there is in Mises a basically democratic concern and, in an important sense, an egalitarianism, such that this requires special comment.

Selected Works of Ludwig von Mises

(a price indicates that the book is in print)

Human Action: A Treatise on Economics, 3rd. rev. ed. (repr.: Chicago: Regnery, 1966). $17.50.

Socialism: An Economic and Sociological Analysis (New Haven, Conn.: Yale, 1951).

The Free and Prosperous Commonwealth: An Exposition of the Ideas of Classical Liberalism (Princeton, New Jersey: Van Nostrand, 1962).

The Theory of Money and Credit (repr.: Irvington, N.Y.: Foundation for Economic Education, 1971). $4.00

Theory and History (repr.: New Rochelle, N.Y.: Arlington, 1969) $10.00

Planned Chaos (repr.: Irvington, N.Y.: Foundation for Economic Education, 1961). $1.00

Bureaucracy (repr.: New Rochelle, N. Y.: Arlington, 1969).

Omnipotent Government: The Rise of the Total State and Total War (repr.: New Rochelle, N. Y.: Arlington, 1969). $8.00.

The best introduction is: *The Essential von Mises,* by Murray N. Rothbard, available from Bramble Mini-Books, Box 836, Lansing, Mich. 48904

Mises' fundamentally democratic and egalitarian outlook is not, of course, to be understood in terms of belief in some innate equality of talents or in equality of income (about both of which so much nonsense is now being written and, more often, spoken). When Mises discusses the great question of the equality of human beings in society, he does not have in mind a future fantasy utopia, where each will absolutely count for one and none for more than one, but rather the empirical conditions under which human beings have hitherto found themselves in various societies. What have actually been the conditions of class, status, degree, and privilege in the history of mankind, and what difference does capitalism make? The history of pre-capitalist societies is one of slavery, serfdom and caste- and class-privileges in the most degrading forms. It is history made by slave-owners, warrior-nobles and eunuch-makers, by kings, their mistresses, and courtiers, by priests and other Mandarin-intellectuals—by parasites and oppressors of all descriptions. Capitalism shifts the whole center of gravity of society ("The World Turned Upside Down," as Lord Cornwallis' troops played at Yorktown). In the hackneyed but true and sociologically enormously important statement: every dollar, whether in the possession of someone totally lacking in the social graces, of someone of "mean birth," of a Jew, of a black, of someone no one ever even *heard of,* is the equal of every other dollar, and commands products and services on the market which talented people must structure their lives to provide. As Marx and Engels observed, *the market* breaks down every Chinese Wall and levels the world of status and traditional privilege that the West inherited from the Middle Ages. It is the battering-ram of the great democratic revolution of modern times. (This is what is behind the continuing American Revolution that Revel talks about, in his *Neither Marx Nor Jesus,* although he appears to be too superficial to be able to identify it.) Mises maintained that the pseudorevolution which socialism would bring about would be much more likely to lead to the re-emergence of the society of status and the redegradation of the masses to the position of pawns, to be *planned for* by an elite which would assign itself the title role in the heroic melodrama, *Man Consciously Makes His Own History.*

As far as the caliber and quality of Mises' thinking goes, my own view is that he is able to penetrate to the heart of important questions, where other writers typically exhaust their capacities on peripheral points. Some of my favorite examples are his discussions of "worker control" (which promises to become the preferred social system of the Left in many Western countries), and of Marxist social philosophy (which Mises deals with in a number of his books, most extensively and trenchantly in *Theory and History,* pp. 102-158). As an illustration of the power of Mises' thought, however, an example of greater interest to conservatives might be his clarification of the relationship of Christianity to capitalism and socialism.

That there is an intimate relationship between commitment to a free society and faith in Christianity is a view commonly found among American conservatives, and one that is usually argued for in the vaguest and most general terms. The thinking embodied in writings along these lines could, it seems to me, be tightened up immeasurably by a reading of the brief section in Mises' *Socialism* dealing with "Christianity and Socialism." For although the social philosophy implied in the Gospels is "not socialistic and not communistic," Mises asserts that the Gospels are of no help to

the free society either, being "indifferent to all social questions on the one hand, full of resentment against all property and all owners on the other."

It was Christianity's very lack of close involvement with any particular social system that was in part responsible for its phenomenal success: "Being neutral to any social system, it was able to traverse the centuries without being destroyed by the tremendous social revolutions which took place. Only for this reason could it be become the religion of the Roman Emperors and Anglo-Saxon entrepreneurs, of African Negroes and European Teutons, medieval feudal lords and modern industrial laborers. Each epoch and every party has been able to take from it what they wanted, because it contains nothing which binds it to a definite social order." Interestingly, this is the same conclusion which Tocqueville finally reaches in his preface to *The Old Regime and the Revolution,* where he despairs of Christianity's being of any particular value for the free society, because "the patrimony of the Christian faith is not of this world."

Christianity, moreover, could sometimes be harmful to the free society. Mises, who had witnessed the rise to prominence of a "Christian social thought" and Christian social movements that tried to distance themselves equally from socialism and from horrid laissez faire, underscored the continued warfare of the churches against liberal institutions in terms which some may find surprising:"It is the resistance which the Church has offered to the spread of liberal ideas which has prepared the soil for the destructive resentment of modern socialist thought.... It is not as if the resistance of the Church to liberal ideas was harmless.... In the last decades we have witnessed with horror its terrible transformation into an enemy of society. For the Church, Catholic as well as Protestant, is not the least of the factors responsible for the prevalence of the destructive ideals in the world today...."

Finally, Mises contrasts the ethical achievements of Christianity over two thousand years with what capitalism has accomplished in a couple of centuries: "Compare the results achieved by these 'shopkeeper ethics' with the achievements of Christianity! Christianity has acquiesced in slavery and polygamy, has practically canonized war, has, in the name of the Lord, burnt heretics and devastated countries. The much abused 'shopkeepers' have abolished slavery and serfdom, made woman the companion of man with equal rights, proclaimed equality before the law and the freedom of thought and opinion, declared war on war, abolished torture, and mitigated the cruelty of punishment. What cultural force can boast of similar achievements?"

What emerges from these pages is by no means a free-thinking attack on Christianity *per se*: Mises, perfectly content with his own personal rationalist and scientific world-view, looking on all forms of "fanaticism" with an almost French irony and skeptical detachment, could not be less interested in any individual's profession of religious faith. But, as a historical and sociological matter, the notion that Christianity is particularly useful to proponents of a free society (in reason, of course, and not as a propagandist's trick), and the naive Sunday preacher's idea that it is synonomous in actual practice with all elevated ethics, are rendered completely untenable.

We appear to be entering an age of increasing "social" concern on the part of the Christian churches: as an example, after centuries of (at best) utter indifference to mercantilist-created poverty, to imperialism, overpopulation, and other causes of world wars, Roman Catholic bishops meeting at a synod in Rome have expressed their deep concern over "structural" injustices in the international economy, including multinational corporations and the world monetary system. While some Christian theologians engage in "dialogues" with Marxist theoreticians, others are desperately anxious to prove the relevance of their creed to current problems through all sorts of activism and "witnessing." Perhaps most significantly, in the spring of 1973, a Vatican publication expressed its profound admiration of the society that is being built in China, and noted the similarity of many of its values and aspirations to those of Christianity and the social teachings of the popes. In particular it praised that filthy anthill for its "devotion to the mystique of disinterested work for others, to inspiration by justice, to exaltation of simple and frugal life[!], to rehabilitation of the rural masses, and to a mixing of social classes." Thus, we may be seeing before our very eyes the accommodation of organized Christianity to the *next* social system, the emerging world state-socialist order. In any case, over forty years ago Mises provided us with a perspective on the situation: Christianity existed for many centuries before capitalism; it may well outlive it. And not only is there no reason to assume any intrinsic connection between the two, but the Christian churches in many ways prepared the ground for the twentieth century's almost unanimous intellectual condemnation of the capitalist system.

No appreciation of Mises would be complete without saying something, however inadequate, about the man and the individual. Mises' immense scholarship, bringing to mind other German-speaking scholars, like Max Weber and Joseph Schumpeter, who seemed to work on the principle that someday all encyclopedias might very well just vanish; the Cartesian clarity of his presentations in class (it takes a master to present a complex subject simply); his respect for the life of reason, evident in every gesture and glance; his courtesy and kindliness and understanding, even to beginners; his real wit, of the sort proverbially bred in the great cities, akin to that of Berliners, of Parisians and New Yorkers, only Viennese and softer—let me just say that to have, at an early point, come to know the great Mises tends to create in one's mind life-long standards of what an ideal intellectual should be. These are standards to which other scholars whom one encounters will almost never be equal, and judged by which the ordinary run of university professor—at Chicago, Princeton, or Harvard—is simply a joke (but it would be unfair to judge them by such a measure; here we are talking about two entirely different sorts of human beings).

Finally, for the serious reader of politics and social philosophy who has never studied Mises my advice would be to make the omission good as soon as possible: it will save a lot of otherwise wasted effort on the road to truth in these matters. *The Free and Prosperous Commonwealth* or *Bureaucracy* would be a good start; or, for those with a special interest in twentieth century history, *Omnipotent Government;* or his *Socialism,* which remains for me the finest book I have ever read in the social sciences. Considering the absolutely critical place America has in Western civilization today, it would truly be a tragedy if a few establishment professors succeeded in keeping intelligent young Americans from acquainting themselves with the rich heritage of ideas left us by Ludwig von Mises. □

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All the Commissar's Men

In early 1969 the president of *Reader's Digest* accepted a proposal by John Barron, now a senior editor, for a detailed investigation of the KGB, the Soviet state security police, designed for the general Western reader. Several years and many interviews later Barron's efforts were presented to the world in the form of the present book. In addition to the logistic support of the *Reader's Digest*'s worldwide research facilities, Barron had a knowledge of Russian, some background in intelligence work, and—most importantly—a thorough comprehension of the importance of a secret police system for Communist regimes generally. Such a vast and necessarily shadowy subject cannot be treated exhaustively in a single volume, even one of over 450 pages, but Barron has done an excellent job of gathering information on the history of the Soviet secret police, its organizational structure, the methods it utilizes within the Soviet Union itself to maintain the Communist leadership's control over the Soviet people, and most especially its clandestine offensive against the outside world.

That offensive is conducted on various levels: by working through secret police of "fraternal" Communist countries who can occasionally perform missions more easily than Soviet agents, by disseminating "disinformation" and disorienting foreign opponents, by murdering prominent anti-Communist figures abroad with highly sophisticated devices, by gathering extensive military and political intelligence, by subverting host countries through the use of "diplomatic personnel" who are really KGB agents (the author comments that China presents an "exceedingly difficult target" for Soviet subversion, which is logical since the Chinese have surpassed their Soviet tutors in many aspects of state security.) Some of the espionage accounts read like spy stories, which they are, and they supply much of the book's narrative interest. Occasional Soviet espionage failures demonstrate that Western counterintelligence can sometimes be defensively brilliant, but a good offensive is hard to block all the time, and the Soviets make frequent gains in this concealed warfare. Barron is not completely successful in systematizing the information he has gathered: it remains fragmentary at times, especially when he describes the careers of particular Soviet agents. This slight disjointedness does not, however, detract overmuch from the book's interest.

In the 1780s a Russian aristocrat and intellectual wrote a utopian novel (one of the few in the history of Russian literature) in which he described a model society on a distant island in which religion and the observation of religious rites were the responsibility of the police. Nearly a century and a half later a Russian middle-class intellectual, Vladimir Lenin by name, actually brought such a social order into being in Russia. For if a government does not rest upon the freely given assent of the governed, it must depend instead upon force and the compulsion and manipulation of assent.

The KGB is no incidental excrescence on the Soviet body politic: it is central to its being. Barron quotes Lenin as saying in 1920 that "the scientific concept of [utopian] dictatorship means neither more nor less than unlimited power resting directly on force, not limited by anything, nor restrained by any laws or any absolute rules. Nothing else but that." The Soviet security police was organized very quickly after the October Revolution, and its founder, the Polish intellectual Feliks Dzerzhinsky, spoke frankly of the necessity for "organized terror," at least in the early stages of the regime's history. And Dzerzhinsky was no monster from whom the regime now recoils in horror. On the contrary, an elaborate Moscow subway station is named in his honor, and Nikita Khrushchev during his premiership ordered a monument erected to him outside the Lyubyanka prison. Thus the explicit aim of the Soviet state apparatus is the manipulation of the population under its control by force, terror, and fraud; these elements are at the core of the entire Soviet state system. A recent Soviet émigré has wisely counseled all Western statesmen who deal with Soviet leaders to recall constantly that the latter are, literally, killer. One sometimes has to deal with killers, but one adopts quite a different approach to them than to ordinary men with the customary moral scruples. Dzerzhinsky, Lenin, Stalin, and Khrushchev were all men who did not hesitate to kill, and the KGB is the formalized instrument of their control.

KGB:
The Secret Work
of Soviet Secret Agents

by John Barron
Reader's Digest Press $10.95

The very fact that Barron's book has been published in an age so given to the exposure of the American intelligence system and its putative crimes, is important. In *The Gulag Archipelago*, that remarkable effort at generalization on the domestic system which the KGB maintains within the Soviet Union, Solzhenitsyn points out in his very first chapter (on the arrest) that the task of the Soviet security police is made easier by the fact that their victims almost never resist, take evasive action, or even protest. They simply submit. The power of the secret police could be whittled down immediately, he implies, if more victims would cease to submit, as Solzhenitsyn himself and the Soviet dissidents have done. By refusing to go quietly these dissidents have caused their captors much discomfort. We who are the victims of the KGB's foreign operations must do the same if we are to shackle its power.

In his final chapter Barron offers a number of cogent suggestions for combating the KGB abroad, all of which finally reduce to a variant of the rule "Let us not submit." The advocates of silence often advance numerous sophisticated and superficially convincing reasons for maintaining silence on the outrages of the Soviet secret police, but they are all meretricious. Barron's book itself helps bring the entire subject into the light of day: he tells the world of the KGB's guilt without glossing over its crimes, for, unlike State Department adepts, he is not paralyzed by fear of "embarrassing" the Soviet government. There is no earthly reason, he points out, for Western countries to permit the swollen diplomatic representations which the Soviets regularly dispatch abroad: only a few are legitimate diplomats, while the rest are KGB agents there to subvert the host country. Sometimes the disproportion becomes ludicrous: in 1971 Mexico needed five diplomats to conduct its business in Moscow, but the Soviet Union had sixty accredited to Mexico City. Any Western country solicitous of its own internal stability can easily and logically limit Soviet diplomatic personnel in its capital to approximately the same number it maintains in Moscow. Adherence to this simple rule in itself would make the KGB's work abroad measurably more difficult. Then too, Barron recommends, Western governments should prosecute any KGB agents they uncover who are not protected by diplomatic immunity, and expel those who are covered by such immunity; they should in addition refuse to accept as a "diplomat" any individual already identified as such an agent. Barron furnishes a thirty-five page list of such individuals as an appendix to his book. The main thing, however, as he says, is to comprehend the nature of the KGB and its place in the Soviet system. The Soviets, to do them justice, have never really concealed their aims, or even their methods, for the most part. Instead, the West has deluded itself about the Soviet system for nearly sixty years, Barron asks us to see things clearly, and helps us in that task. □

Book Review/Harry Clor

In Terms of Rights

To a remarkable degree, the moral language of modern democracies is the language of "rights." Constitutions are said to exist to preserve certain human or individual rights, and, by many, it is supposed that social problems are to be resolved and the public good achieved largely by affirming, extending, or multiplying personal rights. Unlike their eminent predecessor, Edmund Burke, the British authors in this volume seem to be operating, more or less, under the influence of this outlook. But most of these essays reflect a relatively moderate libertarianism; there appears in most of them a greater willingness to recognize limits, to weigh and balance, than one would expect to find in an American book with the same title. And, like Burke, the majority of these authors are more concerned with "the rights of Englishmen" than with "the rights of man."

The authors are lawyers and legal scholars who have been associated with the Faculty of Law at the University of Exeter. These twenty-one essays cover an extraordinary variety of topics. After the initial piece, "The Logic of Fundamental Rights," one finds essays on the rights of the unborn, children's rights, privacy, freedom of expression vs. the right to reputation, property rights, property rights in marital disputes and divorce proceedings, rights of access to outdoor recreation, the limits on police powers of interrogation, search and seizure, the concept of a public trial, and the rights of convicted prisoners. In addition, there are many essays on the right to know the reasons for decisions of magistrates courts, preventative detention in view of the European Convention on Human Rights, the controversies over the provisions of the European Social Charter, and other topics.

The editors acknowledge that they "have attempted to refrain from that exercise of value judgment which is necessary to admit or reject the contributor's claim that the subject of his essay forms part of a body of fundamental rights." In this reviewer's judgment, they have wholly succeeded in refraining from such evaluation. It may well have been inexpedient for the editors to impose their determination of what is "fundamental," but the book would be more coherent than it is if the authors had made more effort to justify as fundamental the rights they discuss. There is little such effort in any of the contributions. The procedure typical of the essays is an opening paragraph which asserts the importance of the right under consideration, followed by a detailed analysis of its enforcement and the interpretations of its scope in English judicial decisions and statutes. Although the authors often adopt critical positions and propose modifications in the law on specific points, the overall approach gives these essays a rather technical character; the specifics of legal proceedings and judgments are emphasized considerably more than the moral, political, and philosophic issues. Therefore, the book will be of primary interest to persons specifically concerned with the law—lawyers, legal scholars, political scientists, civil rights organizations. Yet it could have a somewhat larger audience. While the authors certainly do not philosophize about the rights under consideration, a perceptive reader can find in a number of the contributions material to assist his reflection about the larger questions of the law.

Fundamental Rights

ed. by J.W. Bridge et. al.
Sweet and Maxwell [English Publisher]

In her interesting essay on children's rights, Christina Sachs describes the development in English law from its early emphasis on "parental rights" to the newer doctrine which makes "the welfare of the child" the central consideration in adoption and custody proceedings. Increasingly, the wishes of the parents regarding custody and access to the child (previously considered their "rights") are giving way to judicial judgments about what the welfare of the child requires. Moreover, a recent movement "voices a minority but growing view that problems relating to children should develop from mere consideration of their welfare into an admission that they have rights...without the paternalistic, 'authoritarian' attitude evidenced at present." This movement from "parental rights" to "welfare of the child" and finally, perhaps, to "rights of the child" can provide much food for thought about the law as it touches upon primary human relationships. What are the presuppositions and implications of the demand for children's *rights* as against the prevailing ("paternalistic") emphasis on their *welfare*?

Other contributions to the collection afford an opportunity for comparison of English and American principles in important areas of tort and criminal law or procedure. J.C.F. Kidd complains that, unlike American law, English law recognizes no general right of privacy or freedom from unwanted publicity. In most American states, damages are allowed for invasion of privacy in cases where the unwanted publicity does not constitute discussion of "matters of legitimate public interest and concern." Thus far the British press and broadcasting industry have successfully opposed enactment of any such right of privacy as dangerous to freedom of the press. Yet, paradoxically, English law provides protection against defamation of public officials and public figures to a greater extent than American law. As A.J.E. Jaffe states, when freedom of the press is ranged against the right to reputation, "what English law protects is reasoned discussion. Bare assertion, without giving reasons, is not deemed worthy of protection if it is defamatory." In the United States, such bare assertions are protected as long as the assertion does not constitute extremely reckless disregard of the truth. Jaffe cites the famous announcement in *New York Times* v. *Sullivan* "of a profound national commitment to the principle that debate on public issues should be uninhibited, robust, and wide open." He observes that in England "the commitment to that principle is less absolute." The principle that it is only reasoned allegation that takes priority over the right to reputation is thought to achieve the fairest balance of the competing interests. In view of the character of much of our "uninhibited, robust, and wide open" national debate in the past decade, thoughtful Americans may question the balance the Supreme Court has struck for us.

Regarding criminal law procedure and personal liberties, one learns in this book that a British constable is not entitled to detain and interrogate an unwilling individual apart from an arrest. Powers of detention and interrogation are derivable only from specific powers of arrest. This is a somewhat more libertarian position than the U.S. Supreme Court has taken. On the other hand, the British do not have as strict formal rules as we do for the interrogation of arrested persons and exclusion of evidence.

Particularly interesting are the provisions for the humane treatment of prisoners in the English penal system. English law provides (and has long provided (that prisons shall be regularly inspected by Boards of Visitors who are empowered to hear complaints of ill-treatment or violations of prisoners' rights. No serious punishments may be imposed without a hearing conducted by these Visitors in which the prisoner is given the opportunity to state his case. Recently the power to impose corporal punishment was abolished. Yet the Organization for Preservation of the Rights of Prisoners (PROP) is demanding additional rights, including the right to trade union membership, the right to legal representation in disciplinary hearings, and the rights to marry and to vote.

Increasing demands for the extension of rights and creation of new ones render all the more important a serious inquiry into the nature of fundamental rights. In the preliminary essay of this volume, D.L. Perrott examines "The Logic of Fundamental Rights." The approach is that of recent analytic legal theory and is heavily influenced by the work of H.L.A. Hart. According to this approach, a fundamental legal right is either a right derivable from a basic, or constitutional, rule of a legal system or it is a right believed to be fundamental in light of some moral system or code. As a third possibility, legal rights can be called fundamental when related to "natural areas of legal concern," which are those "specific areas of human behavior which are too important to the survival of the society and of individuals in that society to be left to the ... control of merely moral rules and sanctions." This concept can be distinguished from classical natural law in two respects. It is concerned only with the conditions of "survival." And it yields no universal principles for evaluation of the many and widely differing rights that might be related to survival. It would seem to follow that all rights so situated in the English, American, Soviet, and South African (or any other) legal systems are *equally* to be regarded as fundamental rights.

Some of the rights discussed in this volume are unlikely candidates for meeting any of Perrott's three tests for what is fundamental. Certain other rights are treated in such a way as to imply the belief that they really are "human rights" in the old-fashioned sense, e.g., freedom from arbitrary and excessive punishments, servitude, degrading treatment, and retrospective criminal law. The authors do not explore the grounds for this belief, and it may be doubted that the analytic approach adopted by Perrott adequately covers these grounds.

What do we mean by this language of rights which we are inclined to apply to so many moral and social issues? When it is asserted that children have the right to a new democracy in education and to sex education and sexual freedom (by the British National Council for Civil Liberties), is it meant simply that these things have been found to be good for children's development? Or is it meant that a child has, somehow, a compelling (natural?) claim to these things regardless of what others regard as good or needful for him? When it is said that "anyone without adequate resources has the right to social and medical assistance" (in the European Social Charter), is it meant that this is desirable and humane social policy which, along with other goals, nations should strive to achieve? Or is it meant that everyone has an irrefutable claim to such services regardless of circumstances, causes, or competing public interests?

Edmund Burke reminded us long ago, in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, that the whole of the public good cannot be adequately formulated in terms of rights and that it suffers from the effort to do so. This craftsmanlike volume of essays can provide us with starting points for thinking about the question. But we need more guidance than it provides to judge what claims of right are truly fundamental. Perhaps we need, more than we need analytic legal theory, a renewed articulation of the principles and limitations inherent in the concept of ordered liberty. □

Book Review/Thomas H. Etzold

Recipe for a Potboiler

No recent book has received as much free advance publicity as the Marchetti-Marks expose of the CIA, with newspaper stories, columns in the *New York Times Book Review*, and an article in *Harper's*. It is the stuff of which bestsellers are made: intimations of inside knowledge that the powers-that-be cannot afford to have publicized, underdog authors defending the First Amendment against a power-mad government agency, and all in the name of decency, freedom, and the democratic way.

The hoopla was certainly effective in calling attention to the book. And without the buildup, especially without the generous cooperation of the CIA in taking Victor Marchetti to court to enjoin him from uncensored writing and speaking on intelligence matters, the authors of this volume and their publishers probably would not have made a nickel. The volume is of poor literary quality. It abounds in repetition, a sign of poor editing as well as of authors too inexperienced to organize their material. If everything appeared only once, and in proper sequence, length could be reduced by half. And there is little new information—no novel or striking insight into the "intelligence problem," the paradox of secret agencies in a democratic society. Although the authors raise several issues of general interest and importance they fail to deal with those issues in any adequate or conclusive way. They merely repeat jaded jeremiads about ways in which secrecy begets power and antidemocratic machinations.

The story opens with intense, almost religious solemnity, with a format well-suited to inspire spiritual revival in its readers. On the frontispiece is the motto of the CIA, the verse from John 8: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The authors

The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence

by Victor Marchetti and John D. Marks
Knopf $8.95

intimate that even in this expose they are more faithful to the CIA's code than all of the agency types who have pulled the veil of secrecy over agency activities. There follows a brief publisher's note to explain the setup of the volume—blank spaces where material was deleted by the CIA, boldface type where early deletions were restored with the agency's reluctant permission.

Then the show begins, and it is worthy of inclusion in any evangelical revivalist's repertoire. Each of the authors has written a brief confession of previous error and a description of his conversion from benighted service of the insidious and clandestine forces of the intelligence community to more noble service to the nation through disclosure of CIA operations, agents, practices, and almost singlehanded defense of the First Amendment. (The authors received some slight help from the lawyers of the American Civil Liberties Union and Knopf-Random House's corporate attorneys.) These confessions are so remarkable that they deserve excerpt for the edification of all who may read this review but hesitate to part with $8.95 in pursuit of further enlightenment.

The authors are terribly sorry for their sins. Marchetti, formerly a highly placed and experienced CIA official, writes that in army intelligence in the early fifties the "information we collected on the enemy's plans and activities was of little significance." When he was recruited by the CIA in 1955, "the struggle between democracy and communism seemed more important than ever, the CIA was in the forefront of that vital international battle I wanted to contribute." After some years he was crestfallen to discover that "the CIA did not, as advertised to the public and the Congress, function primarily as a central clearinghouse and producer of national intelligence for the government Its basic mission was that of clandestine

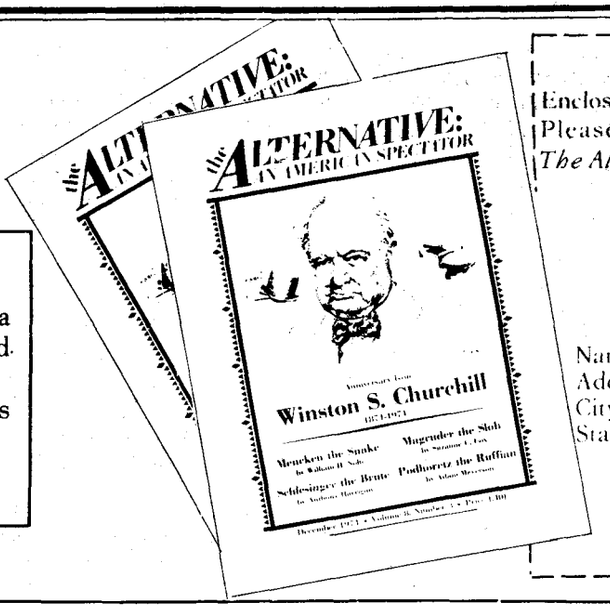
operations, particularly covert action—the secret intervention in the internal affairs of other nations." Finally he decided to write a book that would force review and reform of the intelligence community. Unfortunately, the forces of evil rose up against him. "The CIA...has fought long and hard—and not always ethically—first to discourage the writing of this book and then to prevent its publication. They have managed...to achieve an unprecedented abridgement of my constitutional right to free speech. They have secured an unwarranted and outrageous *permanent* injunction against me, requiring that anything I write or say...on the subject of intelligence must first be censored by the CIA.... It has been said that among the dangers faced by a democratic society in fighting totalitarian systems, such as fascism and communism, is that the democratic government runs the risk of imitating its enemies' methods and, thereby, destroying the very democracy that it is seeking to defend. I cannot help wondering if my government is more concerned with defending our democratic system or more intent upon imitating the methods of totalitarian regimes in order to maintain its already inordinate power over the American people."

As befits a junior author in a writing team, John Marks writes more briefly and simply of his unwitting slide into moral turpitude and his subsequent and miraculous return to grace. Marks entered the Foreign Service directly from college in the mid-sixties. "My first assignment was to have been London, but with my draft board pressing for my services, the State Department advised me that the best way to stay out of uniform was to go to Vietnam as a civilian advisor in the so-called pacification program. I reluctantly agreed.... Once back in this country, I soon came to see that American involvement in Indochina was not only ineffective but totally wrong." Marks was assigned to the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, and when he became a staff assistant, received an introduction to "the whole worldwide network of American spying.... In the high councils of the intelligence community, there was no sense that the intervention in the internal affairs of other countries was not the inherent right of the United States.... For me, the last straw was the American invasion of Cambodia in April 1970.... I wish now that I had walked out of the State Department the day the troops went into Cambodia." Marks agreed to work with Marchetti in the fall of 1972, when Marchetti was encountering CIA obstructions to his plans for writing a book. He "entered the project in the hope that what we have to say will have some effect in influencing the public and the Congress to institute meaningful control over American intelligence and to end the type of intervention abroad which, in addition to being counterproductive, is inconsistent with the ideals by which our country is supposed to govern itself. Whether such a hope was misguided remains to be seen."

These testimonies may be the most interesting parts of the book, for there is little else in it to command the attention of a serious reader. The authors do contend with some validity that the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency cannot overcome the bureaucratic obstacles that prevent him from really co-ordinating or directing the work of the entire American intelligence community (composed of ten agencies of which the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Agency are the largest and most important). There are tidbits of information here and there on the Bay of Pigs, the Chilean elections of 1964 and 1970, CIA contacts with and operations through front organizations within the United States as well as outside it, and other operations. The authors attempt to account in rough proportion for the way in which the CIA spends its annual $700 to $750 million, mostly in an effort to demonstrate that about 90 percent of it goes for clandestine operations and about 10 percent for intelligence analysis. There are a few good anecdotes, the best one describing the inability of the CIA to make the air conditioning and heating system function in its new $46 million headquarters building in Langley, Virginia. The contractor faced an impossible task in planning the system, for the CIA with its penchant for secrecy in things great and small had refused to tell him how many people would be working in the building. His guesswork was not good enough, and soon everyone in the building was juggling his or her individual office thermostat constantly. In a short time the situation had become hopeless. The CIA's twofold answer: take the contractor to court and put locking cases over each individual thermostat to prevent capricious monkeying with the system. The twofold outcome: the contractor won because of the ridiculous withholding of information necessary for planning the system, and CIA employees, many of whom had taken a course in "locks and picks" as a part of their training, quickly picked open the boxes installed to inhibit individual manipulation of the thermostatic controls.

If nothing else, the authors are masters of banality; they excel in simple-minded discussion of complicated topics. They appear to have heard of international law, for instance, and they believe completely what little they have heard about it. They really seem to think the pure abstractions of treatises and textbooks pertain to international relations. To them sovereignty is absolute and inviolable. Overflights are therefore wrong and no country, especially the United States, should engage in such information gathering. The United States should never authorize agents to penetrate the borders, organizations, or governments

I predict for **The Alternative** a leading role in philosophical and political battles to come.
—M. Stanton Evans



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The Bootblack Stand

by George Washington Plunkitt

Dr. George Washington Plunkitt, our prize-winning political analyst, is celebrating the publication of his new book, which is now available at avant-garde bookstores throughout New Jersey. Dr. Plunkitt's book is about the importance of altruism in politics and it is titled What's in It for Me? *Although Dr. Plunkitt expects to earn ten million dollars from sales of his new book, he has agreed to continue to advise public figures through this column. Address all correspondence to The Bootblack Stand, c/o* The Alternative, *P.O. Box 877, Bloomington, Indiana 47401, Continental U.S.A.*

Dear Dr. Plunkitt:

I have returned from the World Food Conference where I learned what it is like to be hungry and poor and irritable. At a caviar reception on the Mexican delegation's roof garden I learned that the United States devours some thirty percent of the resources of that big happy family we call the world community. An African delegation had me over to a dinner of prosciutto with melon and Chateaubriand at George's Restaurant and expressed its concern that the U.S. uses twenty pounds of vegetable protein to produce one pound of beef protein. But the true dimension of the human tragedy of our wastefulness is best illustrated by the fact that America's poor are the best-fed poor in the world—many are actually fat and most own televisions, telephones, and autos. How do you suppose that goes over with the Indian delegation? I suggest we get our house in order or it's trouble for us.

Apprehensively,
Senator Richard (Dick) Clark
(D.-Iowa)

Dear Senator Clark:

As I understand the problem we must make better use of the protein in our own country so that we can ship more to needy countries like Russia. The most provocative suggestion on how to conserve protein came recently in a scholarly monograph which I believe was written by Dr. Jean Mayer of Harvard's Department of Nutrition. According to this learned study Americans waste enormous quantities of protein every year when with shameful prodigality they just stick their dead in the earth and let them rot. There is a great deal of protein in the human carcass, and it could be boiled and put to good use. I suggest you get Ralph Nader to arouse his forces and campaign for less wasteful and more enlightened treatment of American corpses.

—GWP

Dear Dr. Plunkitt:

I am the perplexed custodian of the Kansas City auditorium where the Democrats held their miniconvention, and I write because I fear I have stumbled across another Watergate. While cleaning out the auditorium after the miniconvention I found a human leg. Why would the Democrats have left a human leg in the auditorium and where do I send it without attracting attention?

Cordially,
Ted Wood

P.S. I moonlight as a dairy farmer, so you can understand my fear of attracting attention.

Dear Ted Wood:

There you have it, another example of politicial duplicity. All we have heard is how unified the Democrats were at that idiotic miniconvention, and now you report that they went off and left a human leg. I have no idea why they would leave it at the convention scene, unless someone played a trick on Bella Abzug and hid her lunch. I suggest you send the leg to her.

—GWP

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of other states, nor should it send Pueblo-type ELINT (Electronic Intelligence) ships or aircraft around the world spying on friend and foe. All such activities violate the great law of nature which enjoins states to respect each other's sovereignty. The United States, if it wishes to live rightly, must eschew intervention and avoid influencing the internal affairs of other nations. Curiously, although Marchetti and Marks prescribe strict nonintervention, they do not advocate an end to satellite reconaissance.

Their knowledge of international law is childish, at best. If ever international law is taught in elementary school, it will probably sound something like the eternal verities and naive principles which the authors champion. They believe that intervention is simple to define, and of course to halt. They take no account of the more subtle forms of intervention, or those which are incidental to decisions taken in internal affairs. As most students of international relations realize, there is a considerable range of purely domestic concerns which may well influence the well-being or the policies of other states. Decisions affecting the value of the dollar, assuredly a matter of domestic American law and governance, have the most profound consequences on the economies and governments of states around the world. Export and import restrictions, or their removal or lack, spell the difference between prosperity or starvation for the world's hungry nations. The list could be endless, just as the point is unendingly valid: it is impossible for the United States, or any other great nation, to avoid influencing, or interfering with, the natural course of developments in other states, near and far. The idea that sovereignty is absolute, that any state can be immune to outside influences, is no more than a fiction devised by theorists for theorists and undergraduate students. Lester Pearson said it quite pointedly some years ago: "No nation is truly sovereign that does not possess the atom bomb." Even that was an exaggeration, for the nuclear powers are far from impervious to the internal decisions or external policies of other nations large or small. Think of the influence France exerted on the American economy by turning in dollars for gold in the mid-sixties; the influence of Czechoslovakian liberalism of the latter sixties on the entire Soviet bloc; or more recently, the self-interested policies of oil-producing nations or the development and detonation in India of an atomic device.

Undoubtedly Marchetti and Marks will persist. "International law and the United Nations charter clearly prohibit one country from interfering in the internal affairs of another," they wail. "The other countries of the world have a fundamental right not to have any outside power interfere in their internal affairs. The United States, which solemnly pledged to uphold this right when it ratified the United Nations charter, should now honor it." Stirring words, but hardly convincing enough to bring the present reviewer up the sawdust trail.

After relation of some of the book's defects of organization, style, and interpretation, the lesser errors of fact perhaps become insignificant. Still a couple should be mentioned. The Penkovsky affair, now described in so many contradictory ways that hardly anyone

can discover the accurate story, receives some detailed description in the book, but not it terms that square with information this reviewer has obtained from a highly reliable source (as they say in the intelligence business). It is enough to make one wonder whether Marchetti possessed full clearance for the Penkovsky project, and it seems likely he did not. At another point in the book the authors have Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson dismantling the State Department's intelligence organization and refusing to "read other people's mail"—this in 1939, some ten years after he disbanded the group, fully six years after he left the Department.

There remains the largest question raised by this book. Did Marchetti have, as he claims, a constitutional right to publish what he wished about the CIA, its operations, agents, fronts? The CIA's success in partly censoring the book, and its ability to win in court a permanent injunction against Marchetti's writing and speaking on intelligence matters without submitting his text to CIA scrutiny, rested on the government's argument that Marchetti had signed an agreement with the CIA to remain silent about his work and what he learned in the course of his employment in the agency. Like all employees of the intelligence agencies Marchetti regularly, several times each year, reread and signed a digest of security rules and a pledge of secrecy. He took the CIA's money for fourteen years, promising discretion and reliability all that time, and then quit the agency dissatisfied. The courts, including the highest court in the land, have agreed that the questions involved were contractual, not constitutional, and that is likely to be the final word. It is disconcerting, to say the least, when Marchetti in his opening confession complains that the CIA has been unethical in attempting to suppress his book.

It would be easier to respect Marchetti and Marks despite the failings of their book, despite their silly-serious stand for the First Amendment and against secret sin, if they did not hope to profit by writing a potboiler. But here one has a feeling of satisfaction, of sin found out and punished. The likely profits of the book are too small to sustain the two of them for many years. They have long since given up their government jobs, and even if the book sells well, as much as 50,000 to 70,000 copies, they cannot anticipate a pre-tax income of more than $65,000 to $100,000 to split between them. One wonders, without undue concern, what they will do next. They hardly write well enough to make careers as, say, contributing editors to *Ramparts*; and no one with a secret is likely to hire them now. Perhaps they should pool their capital and form a novelty company, manufacturing and selling T-shirts, pencils, balloons, and stuffed toys imprinted with appropriate slogans: "We had a secret." "We led one-and-a-half lives." "We kiss and tell...." □

Brudnoy's Film Index

■ **Amarcord:** Fellini's magnificent reminiscence of his 1930s boyhood. A lusty, loving, wry, and tender ramble through the four seasons and the many conditions of humankind. No sloppy sentimentality, but much sentiment. No holds barred, yet without the excesses of retrospective of his most recent film before this, *Roma*. A joy throughout.

■ **Amazing Grace:** A mournfully awful farce starring the irrepressible Moms Mabley, whose wicked charms are utterly buried in this embarrassment.

■ **Andy Warhol's Dracula:** From the folks who brought you *Andy Warhol's Frankenstein*, and with virtually the same cast, the same overdose of blood-letting, and the same "humor." Either you dig the macabre done up as camp, or you don't. It *does* add a dimension to the old Bela Lugosi part....

■ **Earthquake:** This month's disaster film, full of the most outrageous effects and a cast of zillions. Plus an added delight: the destruction of Los Angeles. Serves 'em right, too. The acting is as heavy as the falling buildings, but the buildings falling are the real stars. It comes in "sensurround," a sort of feelie technique that should please Aldous Huxley's ghost, so expect to jostle a bit in your seat.

■ **The Klansman:** Richard Burton, Churchill's friend, as friend of the blacks in a town which, seemingly, has written the book on bigotry. *Klansman* tries to compress every outrage against Negroes into two hours.

■ **Lacombe, Lucien:** An absolute triumph from Louis Malle, the story of a young French peasant who becomes a collaborator in 1944, finds happiness doing the Nazis' dirty work and more happiness with a Jewish girl, then.... Beautifully done, non-preachy, powerfully communicating its message by example, subtly, brilliantly.

■ **Lenny:** Dustin Hoffman as the liberals' scourge, Lenny Bruce, here transformed into a liberal saint. Somewhere, deep within, there's an important message: don't stifle your eccentrics; let 'em be. But the film buries Lenny under the weight of its own reverence, shows us only a bit of the Lenny who skewered every convention, who made fun of everybody and everything, who rewrote the score on bad taste. Hoffman is superb, as is Valerine Perrine playing his wife, Honey. Some of the material is remarkably well transposed directly from Bruce's routines to this movie, though much of it is too chopped up to have much power. *Lenny* is only part of the real Bruce, and that not the least attractive, though it is unattractive enough.

■ **The Little Prince:** Antoine de Saint-Exupery's joyfilled tale of adult awareness of realities as seen through the eyes of a child. Here transformed into a musical so bombastic that the poor tyke is buried beneath it. One saving grace: Bob Fosse as the snake, undulating, vamping, hissing his way right into your heart. The rest goes to your stomach, like a bad matzo ball.

■ **The Memory of Us:** "The most important picture ever," the ads instruct us. Hardly, but a perceptive analysis of a marriage in shreds, with Ellen Geer, Will Geer, and Rosemarie.

■ **The Phantom of Liberty:** Another extended dig at the bourgeoisie, from Luis Bunuel. Everything turned upside down, every convention shattered, all connective tissue severed, until at the end, suddenly, one realizes that—one doesn't understand a bit of it. But every Bunuel film is an extended dig at the bourgeoisie, this must be too.

■ **Scenes from a Marriage:** Ingmar Bergman's investigation of a modern alliance gone sour, distilled from a lengthy six-part TV series into a massively jarring mvoie starring Liv Ullmann. Claustrophobic photography, sophisticated and chilling dialogue, a phenomenally fine work. Not for those whose marriages are on the rocks.

■ **The Trial of Billy Jack:** Installment #3 in the profitable exploitation series on the modern saint, half-breed Billy, and his gal friend and her freedom school. Husband-wife team Delores Taylor and Tom Laughlin milk every drop of bathos from the ludicrous adventures of our hero.

■ **A Woman Under the Influence:** The finest American film of the year, without a doubt. John Cassavetes' unnerving, devastating examination of a woman distraught beyond repair, with Peter Falk ("Columbo") as Nick Longhetti and the absolutely fabulous Gena Rowlands as his wife Mabel. It is to the American film of the '70s as Bergman's *Scenes from a Marriage* is to the Swedish: the rule breaker, the pathfinder, the new standard of honesty. Not to be missed. □

The Perils of Poetry

I had never dared hope I would one day see M. published, that I would hold his books in my hands, make notes in the margins, correct mistakes in the texts, and feel that joy of knowing that the work of my life is done: the books are there, and though some things are lost, the bulk is preserved and exists. Who could have ever hoped for so much....

Nadezhda Mandelstam dared to hope for so much, and for her efforts, another chapter in the horror story of the development of the Soviet state has been preserved. Nadezhda Mandelstam is not optimistic about the future of her country. Indeed, she seems somehow anxious that her life should end. She has fulfilled her mission—the preservation, for future generations, of a great part of her husband's work. Osip Mandelstam's work has been published in the West, and after a "qualified" rehabilitation and many years of expectation, a volume of selected poems appeared in the Soviet Union in 1974.

Nadezhda Mandelstam is in her eighth decade, now residing in Moscow, a city where she was once forbidden to live for many years after her husband's death. Few are left in the Soviet Union who have witnessed, much less been intimately involved in the cruel machinations of the Soviet state from its earliest days. She has known hope for the new regime, and she has witnessed the initiation and tightening of the stranglehold on the people. She has lived through "thaws"—and she has lived through periods of repression unparalleled in modern history. She has been a part of a literary elite, and she has fought against the extinction of its work. She has seen friend turn informer, and has seen loved ones disappear never to be heard from again. She has treasured friendships of some of twentieth century Russia's greatest literary minds. She has known a good marriage, and she has devoted a lifetime to her husband's memory. She has known cold, hunger, rotten living conditions, and isolation. This is the material of which *Hope against Hope* and *Hope Abandoned* are written.

Hope against Hope traces the life of Osip and Nadezhda Mandelstam from a knock on the door which announced their separation, to Osip's death sometime in 1938. *Hope Abandoned* covers a wider period of time, tracing the couple's life together, and includes Nadezhda Mandelstam's observations on the present-day conditions of the Soviet state. Both are remarkable books. The simple fact that they exist and that we are able to read them is remarkable. As the character of the so-called open regime became known, literature and poetry were forced underground, extraordinary individuals committed hours and hours of work to memory, and Nadezhda Mandelstam must be considered the foremost among them. Both of her books today circulate only in *samizdat* (the illicit distribution of manuscripts typed or handwritten one-at-a-time by individuals), not exactly a sign that the system is any more open than it was under Stalin.

Hope against Hope

By Nadezhda Mandelstam
Atheneum (1970) $10

Hope Abandoned

By Nadezhda Mandelstam
Atheneum (1974) $13.95

The books are remarkable as well because of what we can learn about twentieth century Russia. Not only does Nadezhda Mandelstam write well, but she is a gifted critic of her husband's work and the works of a host of other literary giants who were friends of the couple. Akmatova, Pasternak, and Mayakovski all come under her knowledgeable scrutiny. She is an excellent historian though her method is quite unchronological. As a political commentator, she paints an unforgettable picture of the nature of totalitarian government. Her memory is incredible. Nothing has escaped her watchful eye. With brilliance and candor she describes the suffering of the Russian people since 1917.

Nadezhda and Osip date their meeting from 1919, but they did not live together until 1922, when the Civil War ended. Osip's early work had been well received, and he became associated with a group of poets called the Acmeists, who rejected the other-worldly projection which had characterized Russian poetry for more than a decade. Soon it became clear to the Mandelstams who the victors of the Civil War were, and as always, "people were bowing and scraping to them." Henceforth, Osip was in constant trouble with the Soviet regime.

Osip's troubles began in 1923, when he was blacklisted and it became difficult for him to publish or to find work. In 1925, he stopped writing original poetry. He resumed writing five years later, and his "hard core, a deep bedrock of principles which set him apart from anyone of his own or later generations" also caused him to lash out again at the regime which was destroying a people he loved. As a result, he was arrested in 1934, after reciting a poem in which he referred to Stalin as a murderer and a "peasant slayer." The secret police interrogated Osip about the poem, but Bukharin—then a member of the Party's Central Committee and later executed after one of the great show trials in Moscow—intervened to save him from death. Instead, Osip was exiled to Voronezh, where Nadezhda joined him. Through her he was able to keep contact with Akmatova and other friends. In 1937, they were allowed to return to Moscow, but were denied housing because of Osip's previous arrest. On May 1, 1938 Osip Mandelstam was arrested once more, never to be seen by his wife again.

For the rest of her life, Nadezhda Mandelstam was devoted to the memory of her husband. Anna Akmatova, probably Russia's greatest woman poet, was to say to her, when learning of Osip's death, "Now you are all we have left of Osip."

To their life together, Osip Mandelstam gave firm direction. It was almost as if he knew what the future was to hold, and he was determined to preserve as much as he could through his devoted wife. He was insistent on molding her in his image. He and Akmatova taught her to appreciate and understand poetry, and she became a gifted critic. Of their relationship, she says, "In shaping himself, he shaped me as well, the two things went together." Though she often recoiled from his dominance, she has no regrets about the life they lived together. She would be content "to sit at his side, never saying a word or interrupting." Her mission in life sustained her and without it she believes she would have long ago fallen by the wayside. It has been a long and hard fight and Nadezhda often wonders about the suffering they had to endure.

Poets Need Not Apply

In the aftermath of an unfortunate encounter that our erstwhile production manager had with a small Egyptian cobra, which our editor has been entertaining as a house guest, The Alternative has an immediate opening for a production manager. Of course, in conformity with all the abstruse canons of constitutionality vouchsafed us by our judicial seers we shall consider any idiot who staggers into the office, but we would like to suggest that it is commendable for all applicants to have a vague familiarity with the English language, some curiosity about public affairs, the ability to type, read proof, and do layout and pasteup.

If you are interested in the above mentioned patriotic service please contact Baron Von Kannon at P.O. Box 877, 102 W. Sixth Street, Bloomington, Indiana 47401. Telephone: (812) 334-2715.

"If M. had meekly agreed to receive his benefits, like the rest, he would have remained alive. We would have lived a long and comfortable life together, and he would never have known the horror of waiting for death and his atrocious end in the concentration camp. My heart aches so much when I think of his last days that I involuntarily begin to wonder what it would have been if we had agreed to the sort of compromise always regarded as 'reasonable.' I invariably advise my friends to do so. Unfortunately, 'compromise' in this country means something different from elswhere, namely selling yourself body and soul...."

It is difficult to comprehend that a single individual, whose poetry was a "purely personal affair," could present such a threat to a regime as powerful as the Soviet state. Osip Mandelstam once said that in no other country was poetry so highly respected as in the Soviet Union, where people were killed for it. Reading these two books was for me, positively numbing. But perhaps there is hope, and at least for Nadezhda Mandelstam there is peace of mind. In *Hope against Hope,* Nadezhda Mandelstam states, "Poetry is a law unto itself; it is impossible to bury it alive and even a powerful propaganda machine such as ours cannot prevent it from living on." Her friend, Anna Akmatova, replied, "I am easy of mind now. We have seen how durable poetry is."

Just as Osip Mandlestam's poetry has proven durable, so will the valuable contribution of his wife. □

The Phantom of the Paradise

I went to see *The Phantom of the Paradise* by mistake. I thought I was going to see Luis Bunuel's new movie, *The Phantom of Liberty*. I think it was because I was confused by having just eaten a Big Mac and an order of French fries. I was concentrating so hard on what symptoms I would have that I forgot everything else.

By the time the titles got to the director, I knew I was not in the place I had wanted to be. But it was a lucky accident, because if you took all of Bunuel's films, great and small, and rolled them into one all-beef-enchirito, they would not be anywhere near as much fun as just one *Phantom of the Paradise*.

That was the key incredible fact about *The Phantom of the Paradise*—it was a pleasure to watch. In the same week I had forced myself to sit through *The Night Porter* and *The Trial of Billy Jack*. The former had been sickeningly perverse and dull. The latter had been repellingly stupid and long winded. Neither had the slightest modicum of sense of humor. Neither had the slightest sense of humility. Both were pompous and ponderous beyond words.

I was depressed. Were "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" and its many progeny the only places where people could laugh at themselves? Was television the last refuge for those who want to be entertained instead of bored?

But life is surprising. Five minutes of *The Phantom of the Paradise* had me unclenching my fists. After ten minutes I was smiling, and by the end I liked it so much I sat through it another time.

The story is a combination of a rock opera about Faust, a subplot based on the *Phantom of the Opera*, and a satire of the rock record business. It works on every level.

The movie begins with a diminutive but overwhelmingly powerful and important rock producer named Swan trying to decide what his next musical venture should be. He has been through everything and is currently working with a nostalgia group called "The Juicy Fruits." Inspiration comes when Swan sees a singing performance by a small-time writer and pianist, whose work Swan so loves that he arranges to have it stolen by the motorcycle thugs in his employ. When the writer tries to get his material back, he gets beaten.

The writer tries to sneak into Swan's estate, "The Swannage," where he sees an endless line of beautiful and pneumatic girls, each awaiting a chance to try out the casting couch, in the hope of becoming a rock star. The director, Brian DePalma, has, with the help of his casting director, put together a scene which shows the beauty, innocence, and rapacity of youth all at once and makes it funny.

Swan throws the writer out, has him framed for possession of heroin, then goes about renovating an old theatre to make it the ultimate of rock concert palaces.

When the writer hears that his stolen music is going to be used to open the new theatre, the Paradise, he vandalizes the prison, breaks out, tries to set fire to Swan's record company, is maimed, and escapes into the shadows. He returns to the Paradise and is henceforth the Phantom, dressed as a creature from outer space. There he confronts Swan, who persuades him to sell his soul in order to have control over the new rock cantata that Swan is using to open the Paradise.

But Swan, the agent of the Devil, has tricked the Phantom. All kinds of shenanigans follow. Swan throws out the girl whom the writer loved and wanted to be a star. The Phantom throws a neon lighting sign into the heart of a singer on stage (whose name is "Beef") and as "Beef" fries and is jolted to death, the audience goes wild with delight.

As the final struggle between the Phantom and Swan unfolds on the stage and both men stagger around the platform covered with blood, the audience goes into a frenzy of ecstasy. The Phantom cries out his love for the girl singer, but she cannot understand anything except that excitement feeds on itself. At the end, the dead protagonists are surrounded by sweating, screaming teeny-boppers who neither know nor care to know the difference between death as entertainment and death as the end.

The Phantom of the Paradise captures the essence of movies—it is visual, it has action, it moves along at a terrific pace. It has fantastically imaginative and funny scenes. When Swan introduces his new star—"Beef"—at a deserted airstrip, "Beef" emerges from a coffin, gives a horrible screaming growl, and then returns to the coffin. Of course, "Beef" is a prancing queen.

The Phantom approaches the young girl he loves and tells her that she must choose between true love and fickle fame. Without thinking twice, the girl chooses fame.

And coming from everywhere, dominating everything, the fans scream in the background.

Without the slightest bit of pretension, *The Phantom of the Paradise* strikes its target, the utter insensitivity and exploitative nature of the old rock music business. But the movie itself is a rock music piece, with genuinely excellent music.

The Phantom of the Paradise moves along at such a breathtaking pace, is so much fun, has such a good message, that it is hard to believe I saw it at a theatre. I think I'll see it again to be sure I wasn't dreaming. □

CORRESPONDENCE
(continued from page 35)

To the Editor:

Alternative to what? The Churchill issue of *The Alternative* reads as though it might have been edited by Henry Luce or Cyrus L. Sulzberger. We are all aware that Winston Churchill was an inspiring war leader, a great rhetorician, and a man of indomitable will, but it seems hardly necessary that a magazine that calls itself *The Alternative* should find it necessary to plow that well-worked ground again. Patrick Cosgrave, in the breathless style appropriate to the editor of the Sunday Magazine of the *Daily Telegraph,* tells us that "when Churchill's body was taken by boat down the Thames...the London dockers dipped their cranes in tribute," and that "the strategy of bombing German cities" was "born" the night a woman, during a London air raid, shouted, "Give it 'em back, Winston." We are informed that he "saved the country"; of how, when Mr. Cosgrave exercises his two English Bulldogs, even "West Indian young people" ask "which of the dogs is called Winston."

We are quite willing to grant all that, but I, for one, would like to have expected a little more of *The Alternative.* Is it not time to ask, Was the great military triumph worth the price? Britain went into the war in 1939 ostensibly to protect Poland, but where is Poland now? Churchill, during the war, proclaimed, "I did not become the King's First Minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire," but that is precisely what he did. In his famous "Iron Curtain" speech in Fulton, Missouri, Churchill, in his best rhetorical style, said, "The Russian-dominated Polish government has been encouraged to make enormous and wrongful inroads upon Germany, and mass expulsions of millions of Germans on a scale grievous and undreamed of are now taking place." Less than a year before, however, on December 15, 1944, to be exact, reporting to Parliament on the decisions recently made at Tehran, Churchill said, "I cannot accept the view that the arrangements which have to be proposed about the frontiers of the new Poland are not solid and satisfactory.... The Poles are free, so far as Russia and Great Britain are concerned, to extend their territory, at the expense of Germany, to the West. I do not propose to go into exact details, but the extensions, which will be supported by Britain and Russia, bound together as they are by the twenty years' alliance, are of high importance....The transference of several millions of people would have to be effected from the East to the West or North, as well as the expulsion of the Germans—because that is what is proposed: the total expulsion of the Germans—from the area to be acquired by Poland in the West and the North."

A few months later, on February 27, 1945, he said, "In support of the Russian claim to the Curzon line [by which Russia acquired what had been eastern Poland] I repudiate and repulse any suggestion that we are making a questionable compromise or yielding to force or fear, and I assert with the utmost conviction the broad justice of the policy upon which, for the first time, all the three great Allies have now taken their stand." What, in the meanwhile, it is fair to ask, had become of the "Atlantic Charter," which Churchill and Roosevelt, with all the solemnity appropriate to great acts of state, had announced would be the basis of the peace that was to follow the war, and included the promise that national boundaries and governments were to be on the basis of the principle of self-determination?

How can one explain the obvious contradiction between what Churchill had said at Fulton, sincerely, we are prepared to grant, and what he had said a few months before, also sincerely, before the British Parliament? He was a romantic, a man who lived with all his great vitality and exuberance completely in the present, oblivious to what he might have been or said only a short time before. For all his great knowledge of the facts of history, he was unaware, it would seem, of the forces which make history. Machiavelli wisely pointed out that the prince who makes an alliance with a much stronger prince becomes his servant; Churchill said that he would make an alliance with the Devil to save Britain, and he did, forgetting that the Devil is a hard bargainer and exacts his own price. Metternich demonstrated at Vienna what every statesman must know, that the victor, when the war is over, must live with the vanquished; this Churchill seems to have forgotten.

To put it briefly, the December issue of *The Alternative* was a great disappointment.

Henry Regnery
Chicago, Illinois

EDITORIAL
(continued from page 4)

one resolution issued that will have any immediate influence on human diets; and that resolution will only influence the diets of conference participants, for it was resolved that the participants will meet again soon—preferably in a country whose waiters are unstinting with the coffee. I suggest Paris.

Indeed that was about the only resolution hammered out at these incomparable proceedings. Certainly the assembled worthies spent enormous energies maneuvering for hollow titles. They swapped lies about the extent of hunger in other countries or—if it served their prehensile purposes—the extent of the problem in their own progressive, just, and cruelly exploited paradises. Naturally they chased every unescorted Italian *signorina* into the countryside, and some chased unescorted *fanciulli.* They harangued against the niggardliness of that infamous international glutton that has from 1965 to 1972 provided at least 84 percent of the world's food aid. But aside from these diplomatic formalities the only accomplishment was one puny resolution.

The plumed delegates of the Third World could have admitted that many of their countries have done very little to feed their own poor even when their lands have been fertile. They could have admitted that short-term relief is risky and expensive due to Arab oil profiteering, terrible distribution facilities in their backward countries, and corruption. They could have admitted that their long-term problems include such intractable obstacles as primitively socialized economies that are in chaos, local customs that are inimical to modern agriculture, and widespread illiteracy that prevents technical development or even birth control. This would have opened the problem to useful discussion and possibly to intelligent policy decisions. Instead after many grunts and shrieks accompanied by a great deal of feasting the conference brought forth this self-serving resolution to rub elbows again soon. It is absurd but it is not without its uses, for it proves irrefutably Tyrrell's supplemental theory of political organization. And now my theory can be anointed and sent marching off into the pages of political philosophy along with the thoughts of Hobbes, Locke, and all the other grandees.

Clearly the participants at this fabulous conference did not join together to defend themselves against thugs or to bethug others. They did not attempt to advance civilization one centimeter. They got together motivated by an instinctive need for ontological camaraderie. This was the *raison d'etre* of the World Food Conference, a quasi-political get-together harmless to every inhabitant of this wildly spinning orb except the starving souls who might have been saved. Yet I suspect that if they are not within reach of present United States policy, a policy that has cost us well over $25 billion in the past twenty years, their fate is sealed.

They will go the way of colonialism. □

"Whom the gods destroy, they — — first make mad." —Euripides

Current Wisdom

A WORLD IN FALSE FACE: When Elizabeth Taylor leaves you for a used car salesman you lose something, as matinee idol Richard Burton reveals in the following rant:

In the course of preparing myself to act the part of Winston Churchill in the television drama based on the first volume of his war memoirs, "The Gathering Storm"...I realized afresh that I hate Churchill and all of his kind. I hate them virulently. They have stalked down the corridors of endless power all through history. Lord Acton's observations that "power tends to corrrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely" and that "great men are almost always bad men" apply to Churchill as to all of history's other indirectly great killers.

—*New York Times*
December 1, 1974

VERSE: Mr. Garry Wills, Professor of the Classics, responds elegantly to the Nixonian era:

Mr. Moon suggested that God made Nixon the center of empire on earth? Chuck it, Moon! Rabbi Korff claimed he did not "bring in religion," and then compared Nixon to King David? Chuck it, Korff! Father John claimed Nixon's temporizings would save us from situation morality? Chuck it, Mac!

—*Harper's*
October 1974

HOT AIR: Shana Alexander, toughminded *Newsweek* columnist, interviews the lovely young governor of California at what must have been a gasbag convention:

"I want people who have something to offer because of who they are, not what they are," Brown says.

Like much of his utterance, the remark is tantalizingly abstract, but attractive in moral tone. During the campaign, he often used a mysterious but appealing phrase, "the political will." I asked him what it meant.

"The political will is a symbol for recognizing the right moment and having the willingness to move, to fight inertia. Grace is the energy that allows you to do things. In that sense *age quod agis* means: do the work, pick them grapes."

—*Newsweek*
November 25, 1974

STATECRAFT: An intellectual exchange, wherein the learned Mr. Howard Cosell, B.A. and LL.B., essays the ingredients for America's Solons and Numas:

How can you justify running for the U.S. Senate when your only real "qualification" is that you're a sportscaster?

That's *not* my only qualification, sir. I am a lawyer. I practiced labor law for many years. I have the intellect and the culture needed. And in the last 12 months I have spoken in front of more campus and labor organizations than any man now in office or running for office.

—*Family Weekly*
November 3, 1974

CRACKUP: The amusing direction of our amusing Zeitgeist, as embalmed by a leading vessel of same:

I can no longer eat a bite of beef without feeling guilty at the thought that 20 pounds of vegetable protein are lost in producing one pound of beef protein, and that in a world of food shortages, I have just robbed 20 persons of their fair share.

—*New York Times Magazine*
November 24, 1974

THE TRAGEDY AND COMEDY OF LIFE: A public-spirited citizen of Uniontown, Kentucky thumps for the candidacy of county jailer B.M. Sellars in the correspondence column of the illustrious *Uniontown Telegram:*

In regard to the kind treatment Mr. B.M. Sellars gave me while I was in Union County jail I want to say I was there 215 days and I could not ask for any better treatment and I don't think we could find any man in Union County who would make a better jailer than Mr. Sellars. He feeds good and plenty of it, and treats the boys nice. I think he is an extra good jailer. He does his best to keep the jail nice and clean. Don't forget, kind friends, he is a poor crippled man and needs our help and I hope he has friends enough to reelect him. He will certainly get my vote and my wife says she is going to vote for him for her sympathy goes out for the crippled and afflicted. Mr. Sellars was good enough to treat the boys in jail to a bushel of apples at a time, also a stalk of bananas and when he bought fish extra for himself he would see that the boys in jail got their part. Now how much better man would you want for jailer than he is? He would buy cigarettes by the carton and give the boys. He did this more than once.

I also want to say a good word for Mr. Tom Markham. He is a nice man. Us boys in jail never asked him for a favor but what he granted it. I don't think we could beat him for deputy sheriff.

—*Uniontown Telegram*

PROBLEM-SOLVING CONTINUED: The dawn of modern prohibition?

One obvious solution to the food crisis would be to have the nation turn vegetarian—or at least radically reduce its consumption of meat.

—*New York Times Magazine*
November 24, 1974

THE SCIENCE OF POLITICS: The scientific method as applied to the study of politics by progressive and enlightened women of the fevered brow:

Is there a woman President in America's future? What better way to find out than to ask some of the world's most famous psychics? The occasion: a Psychic Sail around Manhattan to benefit Long Island's Hampton Animal Shelter.

A dozen psychics tackled the big question. While two—a Tarot expert and a numerologist—ruled out a woman President "for the foreseeable future," the rest thought otherwise, with seven pinpointing 1984 and 1988. Other predictions: two women will run in 1976, one having light hair and an M in her name; our first woman President will be the wife of a famous person; 50 percent of Congress will be female within 25 years.

—*Ms.*
November 1974

EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE: In the event that any of our readers intend to study English at the State University of New York at Buffalo we quote from the *New York Times* the following spoonery by Dr. Leslie Fiedler, chairman of the English department thereof:

Professor Fiedler criticized his own trade by saying it had, in effect, robbed popular culture of its best assets by imposing on literature a standard language.

"We have been educating people to give up their mother tongues," he said. "We have taken away the natural dialect of the streets and we teach them another dialect which they are told ensures entry into Okay levels of society. We teachers of English have submitted to becoming enforcers of standards, a kind of thought policeman."

He said he had students, good students, who will refuse to enroll in classes if the time conflicts with their favorite soap operas. He did not blame them because, he said, these television shows offer a "great moment of relaxation, illumination, and escape from the bounds of daily routine and ordinary consciousness."

—*New York Times*
November 18, 1974

Correspondence

To the Editor:

It is perfectly understandable that David Brudnoy would find Charles Colson and Christ an "unlikely couple" (Brudnoy's Film Index, December 1974). "A natural, unspiritual (lost) man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised" (1 Cor. 2:14).

It is understandable because Mr. Brudnoy obviously has not experienced the "fun" of a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ who is the only way of salvation (John 14:6). I hope that he does have this experience soon.

However, it is not understandable to me why the editors of *The Alternative* did not exercise more discretion than to allow such a sick statement to be included in the December issue.

J.S. Grigsby, Jr.
Nashville, Tennessee

To the Editor:

I have tolerated Brudnoy's plea for "queer" rights. His libertine views on drugs and pornography I have tried to ignore. However, his crack that Bud Cort and Ruth Gordon are the unlikeliest couple since Colson and Christ (December 1974) made me sick. What right does he have to make such a blasphemous statement? What religion is he?—Protestant, Catholic, Jew, Atheist, Agnostic, Zen Buddhist??? This is just another instance of Brudnoy showing his abysmal ignorance of Scripture. We are all sinners—Romans 3:23. The Lord loves and is willing to save sinners—John 3:16-17. And Christ died to save sinners—Romans 5:8.

Therefore, since God loves all of us, that includes Charles Colson, Fidel Castro, myself, and even Dave Brudnoy. It doesn't matter if we are "good" or "bad." We are all sinners and we need Christ.

Until then I wish that he would respect the rights of Christians by curbing his tongue when he writes. I would also request that the editor exercise some judgment over remarks that make fun of Christ and Christianity.

David A. Williams
Fort Worth, Texas

To the Editor:

This is from a devotee of the writings of Arnold Beichman. I assign *Nine Lies About America* to my senior government class as required reading. (They also enjoy it, even though it is "required.")

I was most interested in his "aside" in the article "From Language to Cant" in the November issue, to wit: "For let none doubt that had the Watergate Conspiracy succeeded we should be living today under a form or presidential tyranny comparable to that of the Lincoln administrations, without remotely enjoying the justifications of trying to save the Union that Abraham Lincoln could claim during the Civil War."

I would appreciate a further development of this point since it has always seemed to me that the presidential tyranny he mentions is just what we had built up by all the administrations since 1932 and Watergate only "put a stop to it" because at last the "liberals" recognized its dangers because now there was someone in office that *they* didn't like. For years I-and-my-friends have been screaming "Power corrupts...etc." but nobody would listen. Now they listened! But I wonder if they will remember after November 5, 1974.

Alice S. Gifford
Lynchburg, Virginia

Mr. Beichman replies:

The writer makes two points:

1. The presidential tyranny I referred to "is just what we had built up by all the administrations since 1932."

2. Watergate put a stop to this tyranny because "at last the 'liberals' recognized its dangers...."

"Since 1932" includes four Democratic administrations—FDR, Truman, Kennedy, Johnson—and two Republican administrations—Eisenhower and Nixon. The two Republican administrations which also "built up" presidential tyranny were fully supported by Republican conservatives. Why single out the hapless "liberals"—or the all-powerful "liberals"—as stopping presidential tyranny when, it seems to me, liberals and conservatives alike helped presidential aggrandizement since 1932? Were there alternatives? So long as Congress seems unable to minimize its localist bias, the danger of presidential monopolistic power not merely in foreign affairs but in domestic affairs as well (impoundment?) is great.

There is also this to be said: Watergate was presidential aggrandizement of a different kind. There is a vast difference in character between a Nixon and a Ford, between a Nixon and a Goldwater. The power to pull off a Watergate has always been a possibility, presidential power being what it is. Neither FDR, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy nor Johnson tried to turn the political process to the politics of personal salvage.

The presidential office is the beneficiary or victim of ethical relativism. If it's your *president, he deserves power. If it's* not *your president, any power is too much. I'm sorry but it's not a conservative v. liberal issue at all or a Republican v. Democratic issue either.*

To the Editor:

While being gratified to learn that Mr. Friedberg found my review of Hobsbawm generally "perceptive," (Letters to the Editor, December 1974) I must object to his comment that I "carelessly [accept] its Communist author's characterization of Zionism as blood and soil nationalism." Let me simply point out that my examination of the statement in question had reference not to Hobsbawn's definition of Zionism, but to his description of the political choices open to Central European Jews during his youth. As I attempted to prove, his analysis of these choices was both self-serving and inaccurate.

By the same token, this criticism might be applied with equal validity to Mr. Friedberg's characterization of the Zionist movement during the prewar (or, does he mean the "interwar"?) years. All of his objections notwithstanding, Zionist ideology did—and possibly still does—contain elements of "blood and soil nationalism," which were conspicuously in evidence in the writings of such Zionist theoreticians as Vladimir Jabotinsky and in the rhetoric of the interwar Zionist press. In fact the *Berliner Jüdische Rundschau*, the Zionist newspaper with the largest circulation in Germany in 1935, hailed Hitler's infamous Nuremberg Laws as an honorable attempt to preserve the racial purity of Jews as well as of Germans.

I mention these facts not as an enemy of Israel, but as someone who admires historical honesty. Moreover, I find that neither my respect for Israeli pluckiness nor my contempt for Soviet imperialism is in any way diminished by my reservations about the racist conceits of particular Zionist groups either now or in the past. It also appears unwise to condemn Hobsbawm's statements, as Mr. Friedberg does at some length, because of their author's communism. As most educated people know, an *argumentum ad hominem* is really no argument at all.

Paul Gottfried
Rockford, Illinois

To the Editor:

I remember Siegfried Weisberger well, for I used to buy books in his splendid book store and drink beer in his magnificent stube which was attached to that book store in Baltimore. The vigorous talk and lively activity that went on in that place is probably lost forever. The world has been taken over by morons and they are leaping out of our television sets. It is good to know that Mr. Weisberger is still around and still raising intelligent hell.

William Glasser
New York, New York

To the Editor:

Paul Reinken's apology for Ma Bell invokes a rather hazy concept of "natural monopoly" as synonymous with overcharging on equipment in order to undercharge on service. A natural monopoly exists when the cost-reducing advantages of size are such that smaller firms cannot match the price and survive. Since the Bell System's rivals are flourishing, the Bell-Western Electric complex is not a natural monopoly in the customary sense. If the FCC really prevents Bell from fighting back, then *that* should be the objection—not the undercutting of avowed monopoly pricing *per se*. Similarly, the question of whether "protective devices protect anything but AT&T's monopoly is a technical question unrelated to the basic issue.

Incidentally, the natural monopoly argument, contrary to Reinken, does not apply to electric utilities, where there is substantial competition with other energy alternatives. All competent studies (e.g., R. Jackson, "Regulation in Electric Utility Rate Levels" *Land Economics*, August 1969) indicate that inter-fuel competition rather than regulation is what really determines the level of the rates. The purpose of regulation is to bend the structure of rates to benefit large users—to soak the poor and aid the rich. This is typical.

Telephone service—as opposed to equipment—should probably be monopolized to avoid duplication. But this argument does not explain why households must pay several dollars *each month* for a phone that costs $25 to build. Nor is overcharging business inherently desirable, as the quote from the Regulatory Utility Commissioners implies, since the expenses of a viable business must ultimately be reflected in price. Reinken's answer is that if we don't pay extra for "equipment, long-distance dialing, and so forth, basic local service rates might have to double." Even if this is true, it is not at all clear who benefits and who pays in such a surreptitious scheme of cross-subsidization. In "A Kind Word for Cream Skimming" (*The Harvard Business Review*, November/December) I argue that consumers usually pay and nobody benefits—that the monopoly profit is dissipated in nonprice competition and rents to specialized resources rather than devoted to worthy causes. Maybe AT&T is an exception, but assertions by regulars and Bell officials is not the right kind of proof.

Alan Reynolds
New York, New York

(continued on page 32)

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